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Page 185.

NEW YORK

A SKETCH OF THE CITY'S SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND COMMERCIAL PROGRESS FROM THE FIRST DUTCH SETTLEMENT TO RECENT TIMES

By

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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PREFACE.

MRS. MARTHA J. LAMB'S "History of the City of New York," the other histories of the city by Miss Booth, and Messrs. Lossing, Todd, and Valentine; the Brodhead and O'Callaghan papers; Hammond's "Political History of New York;" Dougherty's "Constitutions of New York;" Cooper's "Satanstoe" and "Miles Wallingford;" Tuckerman's "Diary of Philip Hone;" Parton's "Topics of the Time;" Adams's "Chapter of Erie;" Shea's and De Courcey's "History of the Catholic Church in the United States;" and Lounsbury's admirable "Life of Cooper,"—the best piece of American literary biography ever yet done,—are among the authorities consulted in preparing this volume. I wish to express my particular thanks to Mr. Brander Matthews, who indeed is responsible for my undertaking to write the book at all.

The limited space allowed forbade the use of the vast mass of manuscript which was obtainable. The temptation was very great to attempt a more exhaustive study of the events of the last forty years,—that is, the history of modern and

contemporary New York; for this is the most important and instructive portion of our history, with the possible exception of the Federalist period. But of course such a study would be entirely out of place in a book of this kind.

It has been my aim less to collect new facts than to draw from the immense storehouse of facts already collected those which were of real importance in New York history, and to show their true meaning, and their relations to one another; to sketch the workings of the town's life, social, commercial, and political, at successive periods, with their sharp transformations and contrasts; and to trace the causes which gradually changed a little Dutch trading-hamlet into a huge American city. I have also striven to make clear the logical sequence and continuity of these events; to outline the steps by which the city gradually obtained a free political life; and to give proper prominence to the remarkable and ever-recurring revolutions in the ethnic make-up of our mixed population,—a population which from the beginning has been composed of many different race-elements, and which has owed its marvelous growth more to immigration than to natural increase.

I had to content myself with barely touching on the social and political problems of the present day; for to deal with these at any length would

turn the volume into a tract instead of a history. I have no wish to hide or excuse our faults; for I hold that he is often the best American who strives hardest to correct American shortcomings, and is most willing to profit by the wisdom and experience of other nations, especially of those that are nearest akin to us by blood, belief, speech, and law, and that are knit closest to us by the kindly ties of a former common history and common tradition.

Nevertheless, I am just as little disposed to give way to undue pessimism as to undue and arrogant optimism. Both our virtues and defects should be taken into account. For instance, there are great European cities with much cleaner municipal governments than ours; but on the other hand, the condition of the masses of the population in these same cities is much worse than it is in New York. Our marked superiority in one respect is no excuse or palliation for our lamentable falling off in another; but it must at least be accepted as an offset. We have been favored with some peculiar advantages, and we have been forced to struggle against other peculiar disadvantages; and both must be given due weight.

In speaking to my own countrymen there is one point upon which I wish to lay especial stress; that is, the necessity for a feeling of broad,

radical, and intense Americanism, if good work is to be done in any direction. Above all, the one essential for success in every political movement which is to do lasting good, is that our citizens should act as Americans; not as Americans with a prefix and qualification—not as Irish Americans, German Americans, Native Americans,—but as Americans pure and simple. It is an outrage for a man to drag foreign politics into our contests, and vote as an Irishman or German or other foreigner, as the case may be; and there is no worse citizen than the professional Irish dynamiter or German anarchist, because of his attitude toward our social and political life, not to mention his efforts to embroil us with foreign powers. But it is no less an outrage to discriminate against one who has become an American in good faith, merely because of his creed or birthplace. Every man who has gone into practical politics knows well enough that if he joins good men and fights those who are evil, he can pay no heed to lines of division drawn according to race and religion. It would be well for New York if a larger proportion of her native-born children came up to the standard set by not a few of those of foreign birth. The two men who did most to give Brooklyn good municipal government were two mayors, one of German birth, the other of pure native American stock. My own warmest and most disinterested

political friends and supporters in the city, and most trusty allies in the State Legislature, included men of Irish and German no less than of native American descent,—but all of them genuine Americans, the former just as much so as the latter. No city could wish representatives more loyal and disinterested in their devotion to the welfare of the commonwealth,—a devotion for which they were often ill rewarded. Of the last four mayors of New York, two have been of native and two of Irish stock; and no political line can be drawn among them which will not throw one Irishman and one American on one side, and one Irishman and one American on the other. In short, the most important lesson taught by the history of New York City is the lesson of Americanism,—the lesson that he among us who wishes to win honor in our life, and to play his part honestly and manfully, must be indeed an American in spirit and purpose, in heart and thought and deed.

Theodore Roosevelt

Sagamore Hill,
November, 1890.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

DISCOVERY AND FIRST SETTLEMENT. 1609–1626

Hendrik Hudson's discoveries—Spirit of exploration—Conquests of Spain and Portugal—Sea-rovers of Holland and England—Settlements on the Atlantic Coast—Effect of battle of Lutzen on America—Hudson's relations with the Indians—Exploration of the Hudson River—Adrian Block, the first shipbuilder of America—The fur trade—The New Netherland Company—The West India Company—Foundation of the city—Arrival of Peter Minuit 1–13

CHAPTER II

THE DUTCH TOWN UNDER THE FIRST THREE DIRECTORS. 1626–1647

Purchase of Manhattan Island—New Amsterdam founded—Physical features of the island—Minuit's administration—Old-world ideas of colonization—The fur trade—Patroons—Vassalage of early settlers—Early farming—Shipbuilding—Wouter Van Twiller's administration—The first schoolmaster—Relations with Indians—Troubles between Dutch and English—Colonies on the Connecticut and the Delaware—Kieft's administration—Improvements under Kieft—Immigration—Swedish settlements on the Delaware—Indian wars and massacres—Foundation of popular government—Removal of Kieft 14–30

CHAPTER III

STUYVESANT AND THE END OF DUTCH RULE. 1647–1664

Stuyvesant's character—Improvement of the colony—Ethnic features of early population—Incorporation of the

city—The stockade on the site of Wall Street—The canal—Ravages by wolves—Early colonial architecture and costumes—New Year celebrations—Troubles with Indians—Revolt on Long Island—Religious persecution—Seizure of New Netherlands by the English..... 31–45

CHAPTER IV

NEW AMSTERDAM BECOMES NEW YORK. THE BEGINNING OF ENGLISH RULE. 1664–1674

The city rechristened—English rule all along the coast—Dangers surrounding the settlements—Rule of Governor Nicolls—Religious liberty—Naturalization—Race prejudice—Aristocracy—Refusal of right to elect representatives—The peace of Breda—Administration of Governor Lovelace—The first social club—Troubles with Long Island Puritans—Prosperity—Whaling and fisheries—Early conception of the New York Exchange—English and Dutch war—Establishment of mails—Recapture of New York by the Dutch—Administration of Governor Colve—Cession of the city to the English—Appointment of Governor Andros..... 46–59

CHAPTER V

NEW YORK UNDER THE STUARTS. 1674–1688

Administration of Governor Andros—Flour monopoly—Abolition of Indian slavery—Contemplated invasion of New England—Recall of Andros—Administration of Lieutenant-Governor Brockholls—Internal disturbances—Demand for a Provincial Assembly—Administration of Governor Dongan—Religious toleration—Establishment of the Provincial Assembly—Charter of liberties and privileges—Self-government secured—Naturalization—Increased prosperity—The Board of Aldermen—Sabbatarian laws—Tyranny of James II.—Downfall of Dongan—Reappointment of Andros—Accession of William III.—Fall of Andros—Union between English and Dutch elements—Race differences and fusion..... 60–72

Contents

CHAPTER VI

THE USURPATION OF LEISLER. 1689–1691

Internal dissensions—Rise of the popular party—Leadership of Leisler and Milborne—Religious troubles—Seizure of the fort by Leisler—The popular party in control of the city—Machinations of the House of Stuart—Headstrong policy of Leisler—Animosity between Leisler and the Aristocracy—Leisler's treason—Committee of safety—Election of the first mayor—Congress of the colonies—Expedition against Canada—Privateering—Waning power of Leisler—Appointment of Governor Sloughter—Skirmish between regulars and militia—Execution of Leisler and Milborne—Downfall of the popular party—Limited religious liberty..... 73–88

CHAPTER VII

THE GROWTH OF THE COLONIAL SEAPORT. 1691–1720

Wars with France—Self-government—Shipping industries—Privateers and pirates—Slave trade—Foundations of large fortunes—Freebooters—Governor Fletcher's connivance at piracy—Administration of Fletcher—Smuggling—Recall of Fletcher—Administration of Governor Bellomont—Active measures against pirates—Career of Captain Kidd—Reform of land system—Election frauds—Administration of Lord Cornbury—Demands for self-government—Administration of Governor Hunter—German immigration..... 89–107

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLOSE OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD. 1720–1764

Characteristics of population—Religious bodies—English the official language—King's College—Social lines—Social customs—Sports—Armorial bearings—Dutch festivals—Education—Constituents of New York society—Labor—Negro slavery—Negro insurrection—Incendiary fires—The *New York Gazette*—The *Weekly Journal*—Liberty of the press—Family factions..... 108–125

CHAPTER IX

THE UNREST BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. 1764–1774

A new chapter in American history—Threatened disruption of colonial system—European theory of colonization—Attitude of colonies toward Mother Country in matters of defense—Verdict of history on revolt of the colonies—British operations—Position of the colonies contrasted with that of the Federal Union of States—Classes and parties—New York leaders of the Revolution—The Stamp Act—Sons of Liberty—Stamp-Act riots—Repeal of the Stamp Act—The Billeting Act—The Liberty-Pole riots—The Tea Act and its results—The First Continental Congress..... 126–148

CHAPTER X

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR. 1775–1783

The Second Continental Congress—Lukewarmness about Revolution—The Loyalists—Mob violence—Closing of Episcopal Churches—The struggle for independence—Abolition of the Colonial Assembly—Washington assumes command in New York—Weakness of the city—British operations against New York—The Hessians—Tory plots—American defeat on Long Island—Washington's evacuation of the city—Defeat at Kip's Bay—Action at Haarlem Heights—Battle of White Plains—Washington's retreat to New Jersey—Victory at Trenton—Terrors of the British occupation—Great fires—Execution of Nathan Hale—Horrors of the prisons—Washington's difficulties—British evacuation..... 149–172

CHAPTER XI

THE FEDERALIST CITY. 1783–1800

Depression after the Revolution—Improvements and rebuilding—Columbia College—The New York Society Library—The State Constitution—Religious toleration—The New York Medical Society—The "Doctors' Mob" riots—Enlarge-

ment of commerce—Suffrage, and appointment to office—Municipal government—State patronage—Foundation of the Federal Government—Leaders of the Federalist party—Governor Clinton—"The Federalist"—Procession in honor of the Federal Constitution—New York the Federal capital—The Jeffersonian Republicans—Federal patronage—Aaron Burr—Scurrility of the press—Political riots—Election of Burr to the Vice-Presidency—Downfall of the Federalist party 173–192

CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNING OF DEMOCRATIC RULE. 1801–1821

Tie vote between Jefferson and Burr—Rise of democratic supremacy—The spoils system—Family influence in politics—Downfall of Burr—Hamilton killed by Burr—Fall of the Livingstons from power—Political bitterness—State banks—Social life and customs—Municipal regulations—Markets—Sanitary deficiencies—Charities—Foundation of free-school system—Scientific and literary societies—Literature—Beginning of steam navigation—The War of 1812—Right of search—Privateering—European immigration—Assimilation of the Dutch—Negro emancipation—The "New England invasion" 193–212

CHAPTER XIII

THE GROWTH OF THE COMMERCIAL AND DEMOCRATIC CITY. 1821–1860

Increased population—Constitutional amendments—Extension of suffrage—Negro suffrage—Constitutional provisions for election of officers—Material prosperity—The Erie Canal—Steam transportation and electricity—Commercial enterprise—Careers of John Jacob Astor and Cornelius Vanderbilt—The fur trade—The clipper ships of New York—Decay of shipping—Dangers of poverty—Increase of immigration—The German population—The Irish population—Americanization of immigrants—Growth of the Roman Catholic Church—The cholera epidemic—Riots—Political

parties—Roman Catholic opposition to the public-school system—Power of Tammany Hall—Election frauds—Municipal bribery—State interference in municipal matters—Police riots—Architecture—Art and literature—European travel and its influence—Social features 213–244

CHAPTER XIV

RECENT HISTORY. 1860–1890

Increase of population and municipal territory—Outbreak of the Civil War—Secession influences—Reawakened loyalty—Active support of the Federal Government—Draft riots—Hibernian riots—Political corruption—Stock-swindling—The Tweed ring—Dangers of the political system, and their remedies—Change of character of immigration—Relative strength of the churches—Improvement in architecture—The East River Bridge—Central Park—Clubs—Public buildings—Charities—Cooper Union—Celebration of the Federal Constitution's centennial—Science, art, and literature—Social life—Future prospects 245–264

POSTSCRIPT 265

INDEX 277

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 1790 . . *Frontispiece*

WALL STREET FROM TRINITY CHURCH . . 38

FEDERAL HALL, 1797 174

CITY OF NEW YORK, 1803 194

CORPORAL THOMPSON'S HOUSE OF REFRESHMENT 204

RUINS AFTER THE GREAT FIRE, 1835 . . 234

These illustrations are reproductions from the collection of the Hon. John D. Crimmins.

NEW YORK

CHAPTER I.

DISCOVERY AND FIRST SETTLEMENT. 1609-1626.

EARLY in September, 1609, the ship *Half-Moon*, restlessly skirting the American coast, in the vain quest for a strait or other water route leading to India, came to the mouth of a great lonely river, flowing silently out from the heart of the unknown continent. The *Half-Moon* was a small, clumsy, high-pooped yacht, manned by a score of Dutch and English sea-dogs, and commanded by an English adventurer then in Dutch pay, and known to his employers as Hendrik Hudson. He, his craft, and his crew were all typical of the age,—an age fertile in adventure-loving explorers, eager to sail under any flag that promised glory and profit, at no matter what cost of hardship and danger; an age fertile also beyond measure in hardy seamen, of whom the hardiest and bravest came from England and the Netherlands. It was a period when the great-

est deeds were done on the ocean by these rough heroes of cutlass and compass. They won honor by exploring unknown seas and taking possession of and subjugating unknown lands, no less than by their prowess in the grim water-fights which have made their names immortal. Their small ships dared the dangers of the most distant oceans, and shattered the sea-might of every rival naval power; and they themselves led lives of stormy peril and strong pleasure, and looked forward unmoved to inevitable death in some one of their countless contests with man or with the elements.

For a century and a quarter Spain and Portugal had not only taken the lead in, but had almost monopolized all ocean exploration and trans-oceanic settlement and conquest, while the most daring navigators were to be found in their ranks, or among the Italians who served both them and their rivals. Even at the beginning of the seventeenth century they were still the only peoples who had permanently occupied any portion of the New World; and their vast possessions included all of tropical, sub-tropical, and south-temperate America. But by this time, in a hundred fights the sea-beggars and sea-rovers of Holland and England had destroyed the cumbrous navies of the Spanish king, and won from those who fought for his flag the mastery of the ocean. Spain was still a great power; but it was a power whose

might was waning. From the time when the races of middle and northern Europe first planted their standards in the New World they have stood toward the Spaniards and Spanish Americans as aggressors. Their blows had to be parried and returned; sometimes they have been returned with good effect, but as a whole the Spanish people have always been on the defensive, fearing, not threatening, conquest.

Yet, though the career of Spain as a conquering power was thus cut short, two pregnant centuries passed by before her children lost any considerable portion of the land which she held when the ships of the English colonists first sighted the shores of America. During the early part of the seventeenth century the Atlantic coast from Acadia to Florida became dotted with the settlements of half a dozen different European nations. At irregular intervals along this extended seaboard the French, the English, the Dutch, the Swedes, as well as the Spaniards, built little forts and established small trading-towns. When the English had fairly begun to take root in New England and Virginia, the Dutch still held the Hudson, and the Swedes the mouth of the Delaware; Acadia was still French, and Florida Spanish. It was altogether uncertain which one of these races would prove victor over the others, or whether any one would. There was at least a

good chance that even the Spaniards would hold their own, and that temperate North America, like temperate Europe, would be held by many nations, differing one from the other in speech, in religion, and in blood. We have grown so accustomed to regarding America north of the Rio Grande as the natural heritage of the English-speaking peoples that we find it hard to realize how uncertain seemed the prospect at the period when colonization began. None could foretell which power would win in the struggle; and the fate of America was bound up in wars in which her future was hardly, if at all, considered. If Gustavus Adolphus had not fallen on the field of Lützen, and had he founded, as he hoped, a great Scandinavian kingdom encircling the Baltic, and with fleets as powerful as her armies, it may well be that the fame and terror of the Swedish name would have insured peace and prosperity to the transatlantic Swedish colonists. Had the Dutch fleets been but a trifle stronger, and had the Dutch diplomats prized Manhattan as they prized Java, the New Netherlands might never have become New York. It seemed, and was, perfectly possible in the seventeenth century, that the nineteenth would see flourishing Dutch and Swedish states firmly seated along the Hudson and the Delaware, exactly as a thriving French commonwealth actually is seated along the lower St. Lawrence.

Thus it came about that the English colonists and their American descendants not only had to tame a wild and stubborn continent, and ever to drive back from before their advance the doomed tribesmen of the forest and prairie, but also had to wrest many of the fairest portions of the domain which the English-speaking Americans inherit, from the hands of other intruders of European blood. Many of the cities of the Union bear testimony by their early history to this fact. Albany, Detroit, and Santa Fé are but three out of many towns wherein the English reaped what the Dutch, the French, or the Spaniards had sown.

The history of New York deserves to be studied for more than one reason. It is the history of the largest English-speaking city which the English conquered but did not found, and in which though the English law and governmental system have ever been supreme, yet the bulk of the population, composed as it is and ever has been of many shifting strains, has never been English. Again, for the past hundred years, it is the history of a wonderfully prosperous trading-city, the largest in the world in which the democratic plan has ever been faithfully tried for so long a time; and the trial, made under some exceptional advantages and some equally exceptional disadvantages, is of immense interest, alike for the measure in which

it has succeeded and for the measure in which it has failed.

Hudson, on coming to the river to which his name was afterward given, did not at first know that it was a river at all; he believed and hoped that it was some great arm of the sea, that in fact it was the Northwest Passage to India, which he and so many other brave men died in vainly trying to discover. For a week he lay in the lower bay, and then for a day shifted his anchorage into what is now New York Harbor; his boats explored the surrounding shore-line, and found many Indian villages, for the neighborhood seemed well peopled. The savages flocked to see the white strangers, and eagerly traded off their tobacco for the knives and beads of the Europeans. Of course occasions of quarrel were certain to arise between the rough, brutal sailors and the fickle, suspicious, treacherous red men; and once a boat's crew was attacked by two canoes, laden with warriors, and a sailor was killed by an arrow which pierced his throat. Yet on the whole their relations were friendly, and the trading and bartering went on unchecked.

Hudson soon found that he was off the mouth of a river, not a strait; and he spent three weeks in exploring it, sailing up till the shoaling water warned him that he was at the head of navigation, near the present site of Albany. He found many

small Indian tribes scattered along the banks, and usually kept on good terms with them, presenting their chiefs with trinkets of various kinds, and treating them for the first time to a taste of "fire-water," the terrible curse of their race ever since. In return he was well received when he visited the bark wigwams, his hosts holding feasts for him, where the dishes included not only wild fowl, but also fat dogs, killed by the squaws, and skinned with mussel shells. The Indians, who had made some progress in the ruder arts of agriculture, brought to the ship quantities of corn, beans, and pumpkins from the great heaps drying beside their villages; and their fields, yielding so freely to even their poor tillage, bore witness to the fertility of the soil. Hudson had to be constantly on his guard against his new-found friends; and once he was attacked by a party of hostile warriors whom he beat off, killing several of their number. However, what far outweighed such danger in the gain-greedy eyes of the trade-loving adventurers, was the fact that they saw in the possession of the Indians great stores of rich furs; for the merchants of Europe prized furs as they did silks, spices, ivory, and precious metals.

Having reached the head of navigation the *Half-Moon* turned her bluff bows southward, and drifted down stream with the rapid current until she once more reached the bay. The

brilliant fall weather had been varied at times with misty days and nights; and during the *Half-Moon's* inland voyage her course had lain through scenery singularly wild, grand, and lonely. She had passed the long line of frowning, battlemented rock-walls that we know by the name of the Palisades; she had threaded her way round the bends where the curving river sweeps in and out among bold peaks,—Storm King, Crow's Nest, and their brethren; she had sailed in front of the Catskill Mountains, perhaps even thus early in the season crowned with shining snow. From her decks the lookouts scanned with their watchful eyes dim shadowy wastes, stretching for countless leagues on every hand; for all the land was shrouded in one vast forest, where red hunters who had never seen a white face followed wild beasts, upon whose kind no white man had ever gazed.

Early in October, Hudson set out on his homeward voyage to Holland, where the news of his discovery excited much interest among the daring merchants, especially among those whose minds were bent on the fur-trade. Several of the latter sent small ships across to the newly found bay and river, both to barter with the savages and to explore and report further upon the country.

The most noted of these sea-captains who followed Hudson, was Adrian Block, who while at

anchor off Manhattan Island lost his vessel by fire. He at once set about building another, and being a man of great resource and resolution, succeeded. Creating everything for himself, and working in the heart of the primeval forest, he built and launched a forty-five-foot yacht which he christened the *Onrest* (the *Restless*), fit name for the bark of one of these daring, ever-roaming adventurers. This primitive pioneer vessel was the first ever launched in our waters, and her keel was the first which ever furrowed the waters of the Sound.

The first trading and exploring ships did well, and the merchants saw that great profits could be made from the Manhattan fur-trade. Accordingly, they determined to establish permanent posts at the head of the river and at its mouth. The main fort was near the mouth of the Mohawk, but they also built a few cabins at the south end of Manhattan Island, and left therein half a dozen of their employees, with Hendrik Christiansen as head man over both posts. The great commercial city of New York thus had its origin, not unfittingly, in a cluster of traders' huts. From this obscure beginning was to spring one of the mightiest cities of any age, marvelous alike for its wonderfully rapid growth and its splendid material prosperity. From the outset the new town, destined to be the largest in the New World,

mayhap even the largest in all the world, took its place among those communities which owe their existence and growth primarily to commerce, their whole character and development for good and evil being more profoundly affected by commercial than by any other influences. Even in its very founding, the direction in which the great city on Manhattan Island should develop was foreshadowed, and its course outlined in advance.

Christiansen was soon killed by an Indian. For two or three years his fellow-traders lived on Manhattan Island much in the same way as men now live at the remoter outposts of the fur-trade in the far northwest of this continent. Some kept decent and straight; others grew almost as squalid and savage as the red men in whose midst they lived. They hunted, fished, and idled; sometimes they killed their own game, sometimes they got it by barter from the Indians, together with tobacco and corn. Now and then they quarreled with the surrounding savages, but generally they kept on good terms with them; and in exchange for rum and trinkets they gathered innumerable bales of valuable furs,—mostly of the beaver, which swarmed in all the streams, but also of otter, and of the many more northern kinds, such as the sable and the fisher. At long intervals these furs were piled in the holds of the three or four small vessels whose yearly or half yearly

arrival from Holland formed the chief relief to the monotony of the fur-traders' existence.

The merchants who first sent over vessels and built a trading-post, joined with others to form the "New Netherland Company"; for it was a time when settlement and conquest were undertaken more often by great trading companies than by either the national government or by individuals. The Netherlands government granted this company the monopoly of the fur-trade with the newly discovered territory for three years from 1615, and renewed the grant for a year at a time until 1621, when it was allowed to lapse, a more powerful competitor being in the field. The company was a mere trading corporation, and made no effort to really settle the land; but the fur-trade proved profitable, and the post on Manhattan Island was continued, while another was built near the head of the Hudson, close to the present site of Albany.

In 1621, the great West India Company was chartered by the States-general, and given the monopoly of the American trade; and it was by this company that the city was really founded, the first settlement being made which was intended to be permanent. All the magnificent territory discovered by Hudson was granted it under the name of the New Netherlands. The company was one of the three or four huge commercial corpora-

tions of imperial power that played no small part in shaping the world's destiny during the two centuries immediately preceding the present. It was in its constitution and history archetypical of the time. The great trading-city of America was really founded by no one individual, nor yet by any national government, but by a great trading corporation, created however to fight and to bear rule no less than to carry on commerce. The merchants who formed the West India Company were granted the right to exercise powers such as belong to sovereign States, because the task to which they set themselves was one of such incredible magnitude and danger that it could be done only on such terms. They were soldiers and sailors no less than traders; it was only merchants of iron will and restless daring who could reap the golden harvests in those perilous sea-fields, where all save the strongest surely perished. The paths of commerce were no less dangerous than those of war.

The West India Company was formed for trade, and for peopling the world's waste spaces: and it was also formed to carry on fierce war against the public enemy, the King of Spain. It made war or peace as best suited it; it gave governors and judges to colonies and to conquered lands; it founded cities, and built forts; and it hired mighty admirals to lead to battle and plunder, the ships of

its many fleets. Some of the most successful and heroic feats of arms in the history of the Netherlands were performed by the sailors in the pay of this company; steel in their hands brought greater profit than gold; and the fortunate stockholders of Amsterdam and Zealand received enormous dividends from the sale of the spoil of the sacked cities of Brazil, and of the captured treasure-ships which had once formed part of the Spanish "silver fleet."

In the midst of this turmoil of fighting and trading, the company had little time to think of colonizing. Nevertheless, in 1624 some families of protestant Walloons were sent to the Hudson in the ship *New Netherland* a few of them staying on Manhattan Island. The following summer several more families arrived, and the city may be said to have been really founded, the dwellers on Manhattan Island after that date including permanent settlers besides the mere transient fur-traders. Finally in May, 1626, the director, Peter Minuit, a Westphalian, appointed by the company as first governor of the colony, arrived in the harbor in his ship the *Sea-Mew*, leading a band of true colonists,—men who brought with them their wives and little ones, their cattle and their household goods, and who settled down in the land with the purpose of holding it for themselves and for their children's children.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUTCH TOWN UNDER THE FIRST THREE DIRECTORS. 1626-1647.

WITH the arrival of Director Minuit, the settlement at the mouth of the Hudson first took on permanent form and became an organized community. He bought Manhattan Island from its Indian owners for the sum of sixty guilders, or about twenty-four dollars, and during the summer founded thereon a little town, christened New Amsterdam. It soon grew to contain some two hundred souls. Even at the beginning, the population was composed of peoples diverse in race and speech; not only were there Dutchmen and Walloons, but also even thus early a few Huguenots, Germans, and Englishmen.

The island was then a mass of tangled, frowning forest, fringed with melancholy marshes, which near the present site of Canal Street approached so close together from either side that they almost made another small island of the southern end. The settlers staked out a fort on the southernmost point, and huddled near it in their squalid huts; while they closely watched their cattle, which were in imminent danger from wolves, bears, and

panthers whenever they strayed into the woodland.

Minuit was a kindly man, of firm temper, much energy, and considerable executive capacity; on the whole he was by far the best of the four directors who successively ruled the city and colony during the forty years of the Dutch supremacy. But the scheme of colonization was defective in more than one vital particular. The settlement was undertaken primarily in the interest of a great commercial corporation, and only secondarily in the interests of the settlers themselves. The world had not yet grasped the fact that those who went abroad to build mighty States in far-off lands ought by rights to be themselves the main beneficiaries of their toil and peril. A colony was considered as being established chiefly for the good of the colonists.

The West India Company wished well to its settlers, who were granted complete religious freedom, and in practice a very considerable amount of civil liberty likewise; but after all, the company held that the first duty of the New Netherlands colony was to return large dividends to the company's stockholders, and especially to advance the worldly welfare of the company's most influential directors. It sought to establish a chain of trading-posts which should bring great wealth to the mother country, rather

than to lay the foundations of a transatlantic nation of Dutch freemen. Hence, the settlers never felt a very fervent loyalty for the government under which they lived, and in its moment of mortal peril betrayed small inclination to risk their lives and property in a quarrel which was hardly their own.

This attitude of the old West India Company was that naturally adopted by all such corporations. It was curiously paralleled, even in our own day, by the way in which the great Hudson Bay Company shut the fertile valleys of the Red River and the Saskatchawan to all settlement. It was a thoroughly unhealthy attitude.

Minuit was active in establishing friendly relations with the savages. His boats explored the neighboring creeks and inlets, and the Indians were well treated whenever they came to the little hamlet on Manhattan Island. In consequence they freely brought their stores of valuable furs for barter and sale. For two or three years the trade proved profitable, while, from other causes, the stock of the company rose to a high premium on the exchanges of Holland.

In 1628, for the purpose of promoting immigration, an act was passed granting to any man who should bring over a colony of fifty souls a large tract of land and various privileges, with the title of "Patroon." These patroons were really

great feudal lords, who farmed out their vast estates to tenants who held the ground on various conditions. Their domains were often as large as old-world principalities; as an instance, Rensselaerswyck, the property of the Patroon Van Rensselaer, was a tract containing a thousand square miles. The introduction of this very aristocratic system was another evidence of the unwisdom of the governing powers. Moreover, the patroons, whose extensive privileges were curtailed in certain directions,—notably in that they were forbidden to enter into the lucrative fur-trade, the chief source of profit to the company,—soon began to rebel against these restrictions. They quarreled fiercely with the company's representatives, and traded on their own account with the Indians; and the various private traders not only cut into the company's profits, but also, being amenable to no law, soon greatly demoralized the savages.

The settlers on Manhattan Island were not treated as freemen, but as the vassals of the company. For many years they were not even given any title to the land on which they built their houses, being considered simply as tenants at will. Minuit, it is true, chose from among them an advisory council, but it could literally only advise, and in the last resort the company had absolute power. The citizens had certain officers of their

own, but they were powerless in the event of any struggle with the director. When the latter was, like Minuit, a sensible, well-disposed man, affairs went well enough, and the people were allowed to govern themselves, and were happy; but a director of tyrannous temper always had it in his power to rule the colony almost as if he were an absolute despot.

For six years Minuit remained in New Amsterdam, ruling the people mildly, preserving by a mixture of tact and firmness friendly relations with the Indians and with his English neighbors to the eastward,—to whom he sent a special embassy, which was most courteously received,—and keeping on good terms with the powerful and haughty patroons. During these years the trade of the colony increased and flourished, rich cargoes of valuable furs being sent to Holland in the homeward-bound ships, and the population of Manhattan Island gradually grew in numbers and wealth. Farms or "boueries" were established; and the settlers raised wheat, rye, buckwheat, flax, and beans, while their herds and flocks throve apace. The company soon built a mill, a brewery, a bakery, and great warehouses, and society began to gain some of the more essential comforts of civilization. Nevertheless, the company quarreled with Minuit. He was accused of unduly favoring the patroons, whose private ventures in

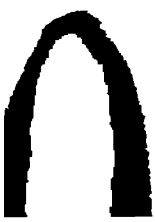
the fur-trade were encroaching upon the company's profits, and moreover he had been drawn into a scheme of ship-building, which though successful,—a very large and fine ship being built and launched in the bay,—nevertheless proved much too expensive for the taste of his employers. Accordingly, he was recalled; and later on, deeming himself to have been ill-treated, he took service under the Swedish queen.

His successor was Wouter Van Twiller, who reached New Amsterdam early in 1633. Van Twiller was a good-natured, corpulent, wine-bibbing Dutchman, loose of life, and not over-strict in principle, and with a slow, irresolute mind. However, as he was an easy-going man his rule did not bear hardly on the colonists, while he won for himself an honorable reputation by devoting much of his time to the construction of public buildings. Thus, he made a new fort of earthen banks with stone bastions, enclosing within its walls not only the soldiers' barracks, but also at first the governmental residence and public offices; he also built several windmills and the first church which was used solely as such, as well as houses for the dominie and for the *schout-fiscal*. The latter was the most important of the local officers; he possessed curious and extensive powers, being the chief executive of the local government, and answering roughly to both the English sheriff and

town constable, though with a far wider and more complicated range of duties. The colony had at this time received two important additions in the shape of the first schoolmaster—who failed ingloriously in his vocation, and then tried to eke out his scanty salary by taking in *washing*,—and the first regular clergyman. The clergyman. Dominie Bogardus, was a man of mark and of high character, though his hot temper made him unpopular.

Van Twiller kept on fairly friendly terms with the Indians, though causes of quarrel between the settlers and the savages were constantly arising. Plenty of wrong was done on each side, and it would be hard to say where the original ground of offense lay. Probably the whites could not have avoided a war in the end; but they certainly by their recklessness and brutality did all in their power to provoke the already suspicious and treacherous red men. The history of the dealings of the Dutch with the Indians is not pleasant reading.

Under Van Twiller there were endless troubles with the English. Both England and Holland claimed the country from the Connecticut to the Delaware, each wishing it really more for purposes of trade than of colonization; and the quarrels generally arose over efforts of rival vessels of the two nationalities to control the trade with some



special band of savages. In Van Twiller's time an English vessel entered the Hudson and sailed to the head of navigation, where she anchored and began to barter with the savages for their furs; whereupon the Dutch soldiers from the neighboring fort fell upon her and drove her off, confiscating the furs. At the same time Van Twiller built a fort and established a garrison on the Connecticut, threatening to hold it by force against the English; but when the pinch came the Hollanders failed to make their threats good, and the Puritans from Plymouth sailed up the river and took possession of the banks in defiance of their foes.

Better luck attended Van Twiller's efforts on the Delaware, the Cavaliers proving easier to deal with than the Roundheads. The Dutch had already built a colony on this river; but the colonists became embroiled with the Indians, who fell on them and massacred them to a man. Then a party of Virginians established themselves in one of the deserted Dutch forts, and set about founding a settlement and trading-post; but when the news was brought to the director at New Amsterdam, he promptly despatched a party of troops against the invaders, who were all taken captive and brought in triumph to Manhattan Island. Van Twiller hardly knew what to do with them; so he scolded them soundly for the enormity of their offense in trespassing on Dutch

territory, and then shipped them back to Virginia again. The internal affairs of the colony went more smoothly. There were occasional quarrels with the powerful patroons, but the director was much too fond of his ease, and of wine and high living to oppress or rule harshly the commonalty; and the value of the trade with the home country on the whole increased, though it never became sufficient to make the company take very much thought for its new possession. But Van Twiller though easy-going to the people was not an honest or faithful servant to the company in matters financial; and in 1637 he was removed from his office on the charge of having diverted the moneys of the corporation to his own private use.

His successor, Wilhelm Kieft, was much the worst of the four Dutch governors. Unlike his predecessor, he was industrious and temperate; but he possessed no talent whatever for managing men, and had the mean, cruel temper of a petty despot. His mercantile reputation was also none of the best; though during his administration he himself kept reasonably clear of financial scandals. In fact, the West India Company was tired of a colony which proved a drain on its revenue rather than a source of profit; and any second-rate man, who bade fair not to trouble the people at home, was deemed good enough to be governor of such an unpromising spot.

Kieft found the New Netherlands in a far from flourishing condition. The Dutch colonists, though stubborn and resolute, were somewhat sluggish and heavy tempered, without the restless energy of their far more numerous and ever-encroaching neighbors on the east (the New Englanders), and lacking the intense desire for what was almost mere adventure, which drove the French hither and thither through the far-off wilderness. Population had increased but slowly, and the town which huddled round the fort on the south point of Manhattan Island was still little more than a collection of poor hovels. The Hollanders were traders and seafarers, and they found it hard to settle down into farmers, who alone can make permanent colonists. Moreover, at the outset they were naturally unable to adapt themselves to the special and peculiar needs of their condition. The frontier and frontier life date back to the days when the first little struggling settlements were dotted down on the Atlantic seaboard, as islets in a waste of savagery; but it always took at least a generation effectively to transform a European colonist into an American frontiersman. Thus the early Dutch settlers took slowly and with reluctance to that all-important tool and weapon of the American pioneer, the axe, and chopped down very little timber indeed. As a consequence, they lived in dugouts or cabins of

bark and poles, lacking the knowledge to build the log huts, which always formed the first and characteristic dwellings of the true backwoodsmen. It was a good many years before the backwoods type, so characteristically American, had opportunity to develop.

Kieft was not well pleased with the colony, and the colony was still less pleased with Kieft. From the beginning he took the tone of a tyrant, treating the colonists as his subjects. He appointed as council but one man, a Huguenot of good repute, named La Montagne, and then, to prevent all danger of a tie, decreed that La Montagne should have but one vote and he himself two. He then filled the different local offices with his own flatterers and sycophants, and proceeded to govern by a series of edicts, which were posted on the trees, barns, and fences; some of them, such as those forbidding the sale of firearms and gunpowder to the Indians, were good; while great discontent was excited by others, such as the sumptuary laws (for he made a bold attempt to stop the drinking and carousing of the mirth-loving settlers), the establishing of a passport system, and the interference with private affairs by settling when people should go to bed, laborers go to work, and the like. The Dutch were essentially free and liberty loving, and accustomed to considerable self-government; and the Manhattan colonists felt that they were

unjustly discriminated against, and chafed under the petty tyranny to which they were exposed.

However, under Kieft the appearance of the town was much improved. Streets began to be laid out, and a better class of private houses sprang up, while a new church and the first tavern—a great clumsy inn, the property of the company—were built, and the farms made good progress, fruit-trees being planted and fine cattle imported. New settlements were made on the banks of the Hudson and the Sound, on Staten Island, and on what is now the Jersey shore. The company made great efforts further to encourage immigration, allowing many privileges to the poorer class of immigrants, and continuing, in diminished form, some of the exceptional advantages granted to the rich men who should form small colonies. The colonists received the right to manufacture, hitherto denied them; but, unfortunately, the hereditary privileges of the patroons were continued, including their right of feudal jurisdiction, and the exclusive right to hunt, fish, fowl, and grind corn on their vast estates. The leader in pushing these new settlements, and one of the most attractive figures in our early colonial history, was the Patroon de Vries, a handsome, gallant, adventurous man, of brave and generous nature. He was greatly beloved by the Indians, to whom he was always both firm and kind; and

the settlers likewise loved and respected him, for he never trespassed on their rights, and was their leader in every work of danger, whether in exploring strange coasts or in fronting human foes.

Besides the Dutch immigrants, many others of different nationalities came in, particularly English from the New England colonies; and all, upon taking the oath of allegiance, were treated exactly alike. There was almost complete religious toleration, and hence many Baptists and Quakers took refuge among the Hollanders, fleeing from the persecutions of the Puritans.

All this time there was continual squabbling with the neighboring and rival settlements of European powers. A large body of Swedes, under Minuit, arrived at and claimed the ownership of the mouth of the Delaware, bidding defiance to the threats the Dutch made that they would oust them; while the English, in spite of many protests, took final possession of the Connecticut valley and the eastern half of Long Island. But the distinguishing feature of Kieft's administration was the succession of bloody Indian struggles waged between 1640 and 1645.

For these wars Kieft himself was mainly responsible, though the settlers and savages were already irritated with each other. Occasional murders and outrages were committed by each side. The Indians became alarmed at the increase

in numbers of the whites, and the whites became tired of having a horde of lazy, filthy, cruel beggars always crowding into their houses, killing their cattle, and by their very presence threatening their families. A strong and discreet man might have preserved peace; but Kieft was rash, cruel, and irresolute, and precipitated the contest by ordering a brutal vengeance to be taken on the Raritan tribe for a wrong which they probably had not committed. They of course retaliated in kind, and there followed a series of struggles, separated by short periods of patched-up truce. Kieft took care to keep shut up in the fort, away from all possible harm, whereat the settlers murmured greatly. All their wisest and best men, including the Patroon de Vries, the councilman La Montagne, and Dominie Bogardus, protested against his course in bringing on the war.

Early in 1643, he caused by his orders, one of the most horrible massacres by which our annals have ever been disgraced. The dreaded Mohawks had made a sudden foray on the River Indians, who, like the other neighboring tribes, were Algonquins; and the latter, fleeing in terror from their adversaries, took refuge close to the wooden walls of New Amsterdam, where they were at first kindly received. On Shrovetide night, Kieft, with a hideous and almost inconceivable barbarity and treachery, as short-sighted as it was cowardly,

caused bodies of troops to fall on two parties of these helpless and unsuspecting fugitives, and butchered over a hundred.

This inhuman outrage at once roused every Indian to take a terrible vengeance, and to wipe out his wrongs in fire and blood. All the tribes fell on the Dutch at once, and in a short time destroyed every outlying farm and all the smaller settlements, bringing ruin and desolation upon the entire province, while the surviving settlers gathered in New Amsterdam and in a few of the best fortified smaller villages. The Indians put their prisoners to death with dreadful tortures, and in at least one instance the Dutch retaliated in kind. Neither side spared the women and children. The hemmed-in Dutch sent bands of their soldiers, assisted by parties of New England mercenaries, under a famous woodland fighter, Capt. John Underhill, against the Indian towns. They were enabled to strike crippling blows at their enemies, because the latter foolishly clung to their stockaded villages, where the whites could surround them, keep them from breaking out by means of their superiority in firearms, and then set the wooden huts aflame and mercilessly destroy, with torch or bullet, all the inmates, sometimes to the number of several hundred souls. These Indian stockades offered the best means of defense against rival savages; but they were no

protection against the whites, who, on the other hand, were much inferior to the red men in battle in the open forest. At first the Indians did not understand this; and in their ignorance they persisted in fighting their new foes in the very way that gave the latter most advantage. It was in consequence of this that the seventeenth-century Algonquins suffered not a few slaughtering defeats at the hands of the New Englanders and New Netherlanders.

Finally, crippled and exhausted, both sides were glad to make peace; and the whites again spread out to their ruined farms. In his dire need Kieft had summoned a popular meeting and chosen from among the heads of families a council of twelve men to advise him in the war. This popular meeting was the first of its kind ever held on Manhattan, and may be considered as the first foreshadowing of our whole present system of popular government. The Council of Twelve at once proceeded to protest against the director's arbitrary powers, and to demand increased rights for the people, and a larger measure of self-government. Instantly Kieft dissolved them; but later on, when the settlement seemed at the last gasp, a council of eight was chosen, this time by popular vote, and took advantage of the dread of the public enemy to demand the needed internal reforms. They protested in every way against

Kieft's tyranny. The latter would not yield. The mutinous spirit became very strong; disorder, and even murder took place, and affairs began to drift toward anarchy. Numerous petitions were sent to Holland asking Kieft's removal, and finally this was granted. The harassed colony was given a new director in the shape of a gallant soldier named Peter Stuyvesant, who arrived and took possession of his office in May, 1647.

CHAPTER III.

STUYVESANT AND THE END OF DUTCH RULE. 1647-1664.

GRIM old Stuyvesant had lost a leg in the wars. He wore in its place a wooden one, laced with silver bands,—so that some traditions speak of it as silver. No other figure of Dutch, nor indeed of colonial days, is so well remembered; none other has left so deep an impress on Manhattan history and tradition as this whimsical and obstinate, but brave and gallant old fellow, the kindly tyrant of the little colony. To this day he stands in a certain sense as the typical father of the city.

There are not a few old New Yorkers who half-humorously pretend still to believe the story which their forefathers handed down from generation to generation,—the story that the ghost of Peter Stuyvesant, the queer, kindly, self-willed old dictator, still haunts the city he bullied and loved and sought to guard, and at night stumps to and fro, with a shadowy wooden leg, through the aisles of St. Mark's Church, near the spot where his bones lie buried.

Stuyvesant was a man of strong character, whose personality impressed all with whom he

came in contact. In many ways he stood as a good representative of his class,—the well-born commercial aristocracy of Holland. In his own person he illustrated, only with marked and individual emphasis, the strong and the weak sides of the rich traders, who knew how to fight and rule, who feared God and loved liberty, who held their heads high and sought to do justice according to their lights; but whose lights were often dim, and whose understandings were often harsh and narrow. He was powerfully built, with haughty, clear-cut features and dark complexion; and he always dressed with scrupulous care, in the rich costume then worn by the highest people in his native land. He had proved his courage on more than one stricken field; and he knew how to show both tact and firmness in dealing with his foes. But he was far less successful in dealing with his friends; and his imperious nature better fitted him to command a garrison than to rule over a settlement of Dutch freemen. It was inevitable that a man of his nature, who wished to act justly, but who was testy, passionate, and full of prejudices, should arouse much dislike and resentment in the breasts of the men over whom he held sway; and these feelings were greatly intensified by his invariably acting on the assumption that he knew best about their interests, and had absolute authority to decide upon them He always pro-

ceeded on the theory that it was harmful to allow the colonists any real measure of self-government, and that what was given them was given as a matter of grace, not as an act of right. Hence, though he was a just man, of sternly upright character, he utterly failed to awaken in the hearts of the settlers any real loyalty to himself or to the government he represented; and they felt no desire to stand by him when he needed their help. He showed his temper in the first speech he made to the citizens, when he addressed them in the tone of an absolute ruler, and assured them that he would govern them "as a father does his children." Colonists from a land with traditions of freedom, put down in the midst of surroundings which quicken and strengthen beyond measure every impulse they may have in the direction of liberty, are of all human beings those least fitted to appreciate the benefits of even the best of paternal governments.

When Stuyvesant came to Manhattan the little Dutch *dorp* thereon was just recovering from the bloody misery of the Indian wars. No such calamities occurred again to check and blast its growth; and it may be said to have then fairly passed out of the mere pioneer stage. It was under Stuyvesant that New Amsterdam became a firmly established Dutch colonial town, instead of an Indian-harried village outpost of civilization;

and it was only in his time that the Dutch life took on fixed and definite shape. The first comers were generally poor adventurers; but when it was plainly seen that the colony was to be permanent, many well-to-do people of good family came over, —burghers who were proud of their coats-of-arms, and traced their lineage to the great worthies of the ancient Netherlands. The Dutch formed the ruling and the most numerous class of inhabitants; but then, as now, the population of the city was very mixed. A great many English, both from old and New England, had come in; while the French Huguenots were still more plentiful,— and, it may be mentioned parenthetically, formed, as everywhere else in America, without exception the most valuable of all the immigrants. There were numbers of Walloons, not a few Germans, and representatives of so many other nations that no less than eighteen different languages and dialects were spoken in the streets. An ominous feature was the abundance of negro slaves,— uncouth and brutal-looking black savages, brought by slave-traders and pirates from the gold coast of Africa.

The population was diverse in more ways than those of speech and race. The Europeans who came to this city during its first forty years of life represented almost every grade of old-world society. Many of these pioneers were men of as

high character and standing as ever took part in founding a new settlement; but on the other hand there were plenty of others to the full as vicious and worthless as the worst immigrants who have come hither during the present century. Many imported bond-servants and apprentices, both English and Irish, of criminal or semi-criminal tendencies escaped to Manhattan from Virginia and New England, and, once here, found congenial associates from half the countries of continental Europe. There thus existed from the start a low, shiftless, evil class of whites in our population; while even beneath their squalid ranks lay the herd of brutalized black slaves. It may be questioned whether seventeenth-century New Amsterdam did not include quite as large a proportion of undesirable inhabitants as nineteenth-century New York.

The sharp and strong contrasts in social position, the great differences in moral and material well-being, and the variety in race, language, and religion, all combined to make a deep chasm between life in New Amsterdam and life in the cities of New England, with their orderly uniformity of condition and their theocratic democracy.

Society in the New Netherlands was distinctly aristocratic. The highest rank was composed of the great patroons, with their feudal privileges and vast landed estates; next in order came the

well-to-do merchant burghers of the town, whose ships went to Europe and Africa, carrying in their holds now furs or rum, now ivory or slaves; then came the great bulk of the population,—thrifty souls of small means, who worked hard, and strove more or less successfully to live up to the law; while last of all came the shifting and intermingled strata of the evil and the weak,—the men of incurably immoral propensities, and the poor whose poverty was chronic. Life in a new country is hard, and puts a heavy strain on the wicked and the incompetent; but it offers a fair chance to all comers, and in the end those who deserve success are certain to succeed.

It was under Stuyvesant, in 1653, that the town was formally incorporated as a city, with its own local *schout* and its *schepens* and burgomasters whose powers and duties answered roughly to those of both aldermen and justices. The schouts, schepens, and burgomasters together formed the legislative council of the city; and they also acted as judges, and saw to the execution of the laws. There was an advisory council as well.

The struggling days of pioneer squalor were over, and New Amsterdam had taken on the look of a quaint little Dutch seaport town, with a touch of picturesqueness from its wild surroundings. As there was ever menace of attack, not only by the savages but by the New Englanders, the city

needed a barrier for defense on the landward side; and so, on the present site of Wall Street, a high, strong stockade of upright timbers, with occasional blockhouses as bastions, stretched across the island. Where Canal Street now is, the settlers had dug a canal to connect the marshes on either side of the neck. There were many clear pools and rivulets of water; on the banks of one of them the girls were wont to spread the house linen they had washed, and the path by which they walked thither gave its name to the street that is yet called Maiden Lane. Manhattan Island was still, for the most part, a tangled wilderness. The wolves wrought such havoc among the cattle, as they grazed loose in the woods, that a special reward was given for their scalps, if taken on the island.

The hall of justice was in the stadt-huys, a great stone building, before which stood the high gallows whereon malefactors were executed. Stuyvesant's own roomy and picturesque house was likewise of stone, and was known far and near as the Whitehall, finally giving its name to the street on which it stood. The poorest people lived in huts on the outskirts; but the houses that lined the streets of the town itself were of neat and respectable appearance, being made of wood, their gable ends checkered with little black and yellow bricks, their roofs covered with tiles or shingles

and surmounted by weather-cocks, and the doors adorned with burnished brass knockers. The shops, wherein were sold not only groceries, hardware, and the like, but also every kind of rich stuff brought from the wealthy cities of Holland, occupied generally the ground floors of the houses. There was a large, bare church, a good public-school house, and a great tavern, with neatly sanded floor, and heavy chairs and tables, the beds being made in cupboards in the thick walls; and here and there windmills thrust their arms into the air, while the half-moon of wharves jutted out into the river.

The houses of the rich were quaint and comfortable, with steeply sloping roofs and crow-step gables. A wide hall led through the middle, from door to door, with rooms on either side. Everything was solid and substantial, from the huge, canopied, four-post bedstead and the cumbrous cabinets, chairs, tables, stools, and settees, to the stores of massive silver plate, each piece a rich heirloom, engraved with the coat of arms of the owner. There were rugs on the floors, and curtains and leather hangings on the walls; and there were tall eight-day clocks, and stiff ancestral portraits. Clumsy carriages, and fat geldings to draw them, stood in a few of the stables; and the trim gardens were filled with shrubbery, fruit-trees, and a wealth of flowers, laid out in prim

sweet-smelling beds, divided by neatly kept paths. The poorer people were clad,—the men in blouses or in jackets, and in wide, baggy breeches; the women in bodices and short skirts. The schepens and other functionaries wore their black gowns of office. The gentry wore the same rich raiment as did their brethren of the Old World. Both ladies and gentlemen had clothes of every stuff and color; the former, with their hair frizzed and powdered, and their persons bedecked with jewelry, their gowns open in front to show the rich petticoats, their feet thrust into high-heeled shoes, and with silk hoods instead of bonnets. The long coats of the gentlemen were finished with silver lace and silver buttons, as were their velvet doublets, and they wore knee-breeches, black silk stockings, and low shoes with silver buckles. They were fond of free and joyous living; they caroused often, drinking deeply and eating heavily; and the young men and maidens loved dancing parties, picnics, and long sleigh rides in winter. There were great festivals, as at Christmas and New Year's. On the latter day every man called on all his friends; and the former was then, as now, the chief day of the year for the children, devoted to the special service of Santa Claus.

All through Stuyvesant's time there was constant danger of trouble with the Indians. Men were occasionally killed on both sides; and once

a burgher was slain in the streets of the town by a party of red warriors. There were even one or two ferocious local uprisings. By a mixture of tact and firmness, however, Stuyvesant kept the savages under partial control, checked the brutal and outrage-loving portion of his own people, and prevented any important or far-reaching outbreak. Yet he found it necessary to organize more than one campaign against the red men; and these, though barren of exciting incident, were invariably successful, thanks to his indomitable energy. By the exercise of similar qualities, he also kept the ever-encroaching New Englanders at bay; while in 1655 he finished the long bickerings with the Swedes at the mouth of the Delaware by marching a large force thither, capturing their forts, and definitely taking possession of the country,—thereby putting an end to all chance for the establishment of a Scandinavian State on American soil. Once the New Englanders on Long Island began to plan a revolt; but he promptly seized their ringleaders,—including the Indian fighter, Underhill,—fined, imprisoned, or banished them, and secured temporary tranquillity.

From the outset, Stuyvesant's imperious nature kept him embroiled with the colonists. In some respects this was well for the commonwealth, for in this way he finally curbed the feudal insolence of the patroons, after nearly coming to a civil war

with the patroon of Rensselaerswyck; but generally he managed merely to harass and worry the settlers until they became so irritated as to be almost mutinous. He struggled hard, not only to retain his own power as dictator, but to establish an aristocratic framework for the young society. With this end in view, he endeavored to introduce as a permanent feature the division of the burghers into two classes, minor and major,—the major burghers' rights being hereditary, and giving many privileges, among others the sole right to hold office. He failed ignominiously in this, for the democratic instincts of the people, and the democratic tendencies of their surroundings, proved too strong for him. He himself strove to be just toward all men; but he chose his personal representatives and agents without paying the least heed to the popular estimate in which they were held. In consequence, some of those most obsequious to him turned out mere profligate, petty tyrants, to whom, nevertheless, he clung obstinately, in spite of all complaints, until they had thoroughly disgusted the people at large. He threw his political opponents into jail without trial, or banished them after a trial in which he himself sat as the judge, announcing that he deemed it treason to complain of the chief magistrate, whether with or without cause; and this naturally threw into a perfect ferment the citi-

zens of the popular party, who were striving for more freedom with an obstinacy as great as his own. Abandoning the policy of complete religious toleration, he not only persecuted the Baptists and Quakers, but even the Lutherans also. He established impost and excise duties by proclamation, drawing forth a most determined popular protest against taxation without representation. When the city charter was granted, he proceeded to appoint the first schout, schepen, and burgomasters who took office under it, instead of allowing them to be elected by the citizens,—though this concession was afterward wrung from him. He was in perpetual conflict with the council,—the "Nine Men," as they were termed,—who stood up stoutly for the popular rights, and sent memorial after memorial to Holland, protesting against the course that was being pursued. The inhabitants also joined in public meetings, and in other popular manifestations, to denounce the author of their grievances; the Dutch settlers, for the nonce, making common cause with their turbulent New England neighbors of the city and of Long Island. Stuyvesant himself sent counter protests; and also made repeated demands for more men and more money, that he might put into good condition the crumbling and ill-manned fortifications, which, as he wrote home, would be of no avail at all to resist any strong

attack that might be made by the ever-threatening English. But the home government cared for its colonies mainly because they were profitable. This Stuyvesant's province was not; and so, with dull apathy, the appeals for help were disregarded, and the director and the colonists were left to settle their quarrels as best they might.

Thus, with ceaseless wrangling, with much of petty tyranny on the one hand, and much of sullen grumbling and discontent on the other, the years went by. Stuyvesant rarely did serious injustice to any particular man, and by his energy, resolution, and executive capacity he preserved order at home, while the colony grew and prospered as it never had done before; but the sturdy and resolute, though somewhat heavy, freemen over whom he ruled, resented bitterly all his overbearing ways and his deeds of small oppression, and felt only a lukewarm loyalty to a government that evidently deemed them valuable only in so far as they added to the wealth of the men who had stayed at home. When the hour of trial came, they naturally showed an almost apathetic indifference to the overthrow of the rule of Holland.

Whenever the English and Dutch were at war, New Amsterdam was in a flutter over the always-dreaded attack of some English squadron. At last, in 1664, the blow really fell. There was peace at the time between the two nations; but

this fact did not deter the England of the Stuarts from seizing so helpless a prize as the province of the New Netherlands. The English Government knew well how defenseless the country was; and the king and his ministers determined to take it by a sudden stroke of perfectly cold-blooded treachery, making all their preparations in secret and meanwhile doing everything they could to deceive the friendly power at which the blow was aimed. Stuyvesant had continued without cessation to beseech the home government that he might be given the means to defend the province; but his appeals were unheeded by his profit-loving, money-getting superiors in Holland. He was left with insignificant defenses, guarded by an utterly insufficient force of troops. The unblushing treachery and deceit by which the English took the city made the victory of small credit to them; but the Dutch, by their supine, short-sighted selfishness and greed, were put in an even less enviable light.

In September, 1664, three or four English frigates, and a force of several hundred land-troops under Col. Richard Nicolls suddenly appeared in the harbor. They were speedily joined by the levies of the already insurgent New Englanders of Long Island. Nicolls had an overpowering force, and was known to be a man of decision. He forthwith demanded the immediate surrender of

the city and province. Stuyvesant wished to fight even against such odds; but the citizens refused to stand by him, and New Amsterdam passed into the hands of the English without a gun being fired in its defense.

CHAPTER IV.

NEW AMSTERDAM BECOMES NEW YORK. THE BEGINNING OF ENGLISH RULE. 1664-1674.

THE expedition against New Amsterdam had been organized with the Duke of York, afterward King James II., as its special patron, and the city was rechristened in his honor. To this day its name perpetuates the memory of the dull, cruel bigot with whose short reign came to a close the ignoble line of the Stuart kings.

With Manhattan Island all the province of the New Netherlands passed under the English rule; and the arrogant red flag fluttered without a rival along the whole seaboard from Acadia to Florida. Yet the settlements were still merely little dots in the vast wooded wilderness which covered all the known portions of the continent. They were strung at wide intervals along the seacoast, or the courses of the mighty rivers, separated one from another by the endless stretches of gloomy, Indian-haunted woodland. Every step in the forest was fraught with danger. The farms still lay close to the scattered hamlets, and the latter in turn clung to the edges of the navigable waters, where travel was so much easier and safer than on

land. New Amsterdam, when its existence as such ceased, held some fifteen hundred souls (many of them negro slaves); yet the sloops that plied from thence to Fort Orange,—now Albany,—or to any other of the small river towns, were obliged to go well armed, and to keep a keen watch night and day for the war-canoes of hostile Indians.

The conquered province had been patented to the Duke of York, and Nicolls acted as his agent. The latter was a brave, politic man of generous nature and good character, and he executed well the difficult task allotted him, doing his best to conciliate the colonists by the justice and consideration with which he acted, and at the same time showing that timidity had no share in influencing his course. By the terms of the surrender the Dutch settlers were guaranteed their full civil and religious rights, and as a matter of fact they were gainers rather than losers by the change. Their interests were as carefully guarded as were those of the English settlers, their prejudices were not shocked, and if anything they were allowed greater, rather than less privileges in the way of self-government. Moreover, it must be remembered that the change was not so violent as if a city peopled exclusively by one race had been suddenly conquered by the members of another. Under Dutch rule all foreigners had been freely naturalized, and had been allowed to do their share of

administration,—for our city has always allowed every privilege to that portion of her citizens (generally the majority) born without her limits. The Dutch element was largest among the wealthy people, to whom fell the duty of exercising such self-government as there was; but there were also plenty of rich men among the French Huguenots and English settlers. It is probable that at least a third of the population, exclusive of the numerous negro slaves, and inclusive of the Huguenots was neither Dutch nor English; and to this third the change was of little moment. The English had exercised considerable influence in the government throughout Stuyvesant's rule, and even before, ranking as third in numbers and importance among the various elements of the composite population; while on the other hand the Dutch continued, even after the surrender, to have a very great and often a preponderant weight in the councils of the city. The change was merely that, in a population composed of several distinct elements, the one which had hitherto been of primary became on the whole of secondary importance; its place in the lead being usurped by another element, which itself had already for many years occupied a position of much prominence. There was of course a good deal of race-prejudice and rancor; and the stubborn Dutch clung to their language, though with steadily loosening grasp,

for over a century. But the lines of cleavage in the political contests did not follow those of speech and blood. The constitution of the Dutch settlement was essentially aristocratic; and the party of the populace was naturally opposed to the party of the patroons and the rich merchants. The settlers who came from England direct, belonged to the essentially aristocratic Established Church. They furnished many of the great officials; and many of the merchants, and of those who became large landowners, sprang from among them. These naturally joined the aristocratic section of the original settlers. On the other hand the New Englanders, who were of Puritan blood,—and later on the Presbyterians of Scotland and Ireland,—were the stanchest opponents of Episcopacy and aristocracy, and became the leaders of the popular party. Similarly, the Huguenots and the settlers of other nationality separated (though much less sharply) on lines of property and caste; and hence the fluctuating line which divided the two camps or factions was only secondarily influenced by considerations of speech and nationality.

Nicolls made the necessary changes with cautious slowness and tact. For nearly a year the city was suffered to retain its old form of government; then the schout, schepens, and burgomasters were changed for sheriff, aldermen

mayor, and justices. Vested rights were interfered with as little as possible; the patroons were turned into manorial lords; the Dutch and Huguenots were allowed the free exercise of their religion; indeed, the feeling was so friendly that for some time the Anglican service was held in the Dutch Church in the afternoons. No attempt was made to interfere with the language or with the social and business customs and relations of the citizens. Nicolls showed himself far more liberal than Stuyvesant in questions of creed; and one of the first things he did was to allow the Lutherans to build a church and install therein a pastor of their own. He established a fairly good system of justice, including trial by jury, and practically granted the citizens a considerable measure of self-government. But the fact remained that the colony had not gained its freedom by changing its condition; it had simply exchanged the rule of a company for the rule of a duke. Nicolls himself nominated all the new officers of the city (choosing them from among both the Dutch and the English), and returning a polite but firm negative to the request of the citizens that they might themselves elect their representatives. He pursued the same course with the Puritan Long Islanders; and the latter resented his action even more bitterly than did the Dutch.

However, his tact, generosity, and unfailing good temper, and the skill with which he kept order and secured prosperity endeared him to the colonists, even though they did at times just realize that there was an iron hand beneath the velvet glove. He completely pacified the Indians, who during his term of command remained almost absolutely tranquil, for the first time in a quarter of a century. He put down all criminals, and sternly repressed the licentiousness of his own soldiery, forcing them to behave well to the citizens. His honesty in financial matters was so great that he actually impoverished himself during his administration of the province. Meanwhile, the city flourished; for there was free trade with England and the English possessions, and even for some time a restricted right to trade with certain of the Dutch ports.

Nicolls soon wearied of his position, and sought leave to resign; but he was too valuable a servant for the duke to permit this until the war with Holland, which had been largely brought on by the treacherous seizure of New Amsterdam, at length came to a close. The Peace of Breda left New York in the hands of the English; for the cold northern province, where now are States already far more populous than Holland, or than the England of that day, was then considered of less value than any one of half a dozen tropical

colonies. On both sides the combatants warred for the purpose of getting possessions which should benefit their own pockets, not to found States of free men of their own race; they sought to establish trading-posts from whence to bring spices and jewels and precious metals, rather than to plant commonwealths of their children on the continents that were waiting to be conquered. The English were inclined to grumble, and the Dutch to rejoice, because the former received New York rather than Surinam. As for Nicolls, when his hands were thus freed he returned home, having shown himself a warm friend to the colonists, especially the Dutch, who greatly mourned his going.

His successor was an archetypical cavalier named Francis Lovelace. He had stood loyally by the king in disaster and prosperity alike, and was a gallant, generous, and honest gentleman; but he possessed far less executive capacity than his predecessor. However, he trod in the footsteps of the latter so far as he could, and strove to advance the interests of the city in every way, and to conciliate the good-will of the inhabitants. He associated on intimate terms with the leading citizens, whether English, French, or Dutch, and established a social club which met at their different houses,—all three languages being spoken at the meetings. Being fond of racing, he gave

prizes to be run for by swift horses on the Long Island race-course. Like his predecessor, his chief troubles were with the hard-headed and stiff-necked children of the Puritans on Long Island. When he attempted to tax them to build up the fort on Manhattan, they stoutly refused, and sent him an indignant protest; while on the other hand he was warmly supported by his Dutch and English councilors in New York. With the Indians he kept on good terms.

The city prospered under Lovelace as it had prospered under Nicolls. Its proprietor, the Duke of York, was a mean and foolish tyrant; but it was for his interest while he was not king to treat his colony well. Though an intolerant religious bigot, he yet became perforce an advocate of religious tolerance for New York, because his own creed, Roman Catholicism, was weak, and the hope of the feeble never rests in persecution. New York was thus permitted to grow in peace, and to take advantage of her great natural resources. Trade increased and ships were built; while in addition to commerce, many of the seafaring folk took to the cod and whale fisheries, which had just been started off the coasts. The whales were very plentiful, and indeed several were killed in the harbor itself. The merchants began to hold weekly meetings, thus laying the foundation for the New York Exchange; and

wealth increased among all classes, bringing comfort, and even some attempt at luxury, in its train.

This quick and steady growth in material prosperity was rudely checked by the fierce war which again broke out between England and Holland. Commerce was nearly paralyzed by the depredations of the privateers, and many of the merchants were brought to the verge of bankruptcy, while the public distress was widespread. It was known that the Dutch meditated an effort to recapture the city; and Lovelace made what preparations he could for defense. He busied himself greatly to establish a regular mail to Boston and Hartford, so that there might be overland communication with his eastern neighbors; and it was on one of his absences in New England that the city was recaptured by its former owners.

In July, 1673, a Dutch squadron under two grim old sea-dogs, Admirals Evertsen and Binckes, suddenly appeared in the lower bay. The English commander in the fort endeavored to treat with them; but they would hearken to no terms save immediate surrender, saying that "they had come for their own, and their own they would have." The Dutch militia would not fight against their countrymen; and the other citizens were not inclined to run any risk in a contest that concerned them but little. Evertsen's frigates sailed up to

within musket-shot of the fort, and firing began on both sides. After receiving a couple of broadsides which killed and wounded several of the garrison, the English flag was struck, and the fort was surrendered to the Dutch troops, who had already landed, under the command of Capt. Anthony Colve. So ended the first nine years of English supremacy at the mouth of the Hudson.

The victors at once proceeded to undo the work of the men they had ousted. Dutch was once more made the formal official language (though it had never been completely abandoned), and the whole scheme of the English government was overturned. In the city itself the schepens, burgomasters, and schout again took the place of sheriff, mayor, and aldermen. There was very little violence, although one or two houses were plundered, and a citizen here and there insulted or slightly maltreated by the soldiers,—much as had happened after the original conquest, with the important exception that it was now the Dutch who did the maltreating, and the English who were the sufferers.

When the province was lost it was a mere proprietary colony of the West India Company; but this corporation had died prior to 1673, and the province was regained by the victory of a national Dutch force, and was held for the whole nation. Evertsen, acting for the home government, made

Colve the director of the province. Colve was a rough, imperious, resolute man, a good soldier, but with no very great regard for civil liberty. The whole province was speedily reduced. The Dutch towns along the Hudson submitted gladly; but the Puritan villages on Long Island were sullen and showed symptoms of defiance, appealing to Connecticut for help. However, Colve and Evertsen, backed up by trained soldiers and a well-equipped squadron, were not men to be trifled with. They gave notice to the Long Islanders that unless they were prepared to stand the chances of war they must submit at once; and submit they did, Connecticut not daring to interfere. The New Englanders had been willing enough to bid defiance to, and to threaten the conquest of, the New Netherlands while the province was weakly held by an insufficient force; but they were too prudent to provoke a contest with men of such fighting temper and undoubted capacity as Evertsen and Colve, and the war-hardened troops and seamen who obeyed their behests.

Colve ruled the internal affairs of the colony with a high hand. He made the citizens understand that the military power was supreme over the civil; and when the council protested against anything he did, he told them plainly that unless they submitted he would summarily dismiss them

and appoint others in their places. Military law was established, and heavy taxes were imposed; moreover, as the taxes took some time to collect, those who were most heavily assessed were forced to make loans in advance. Altogether the burghers probably failed to find that the restoration of Dutch rule worked any very marked change in their favor.

This second period of Dutch supremacy on Manhattan Island lasted for but a year and a quarter. Then in November, 1674, the city was again given up to the English in accordance with the terms of peace between the belligerent powers, which provided for the mutual restitution of all conquered territory. With this second transfer New Amsterdam definitely assumed the name of New York; and the province became simply one of the English colonies in America, remaining such until, a century afterward, all those colonies combined to throw off the yoke of the mother country and become an independent nation.

Thus the province of the New Netherlands had been first taken by the English by an attack in time of peace, when no resistance could be made, and had been left in their possession because it was deemed of infinitely less consequence than such colonies as Java and Surinam; it had then been reconquered by the Dutch, in fair and open war, and had been again surrendered because of

an agreement into which the home government was forced, owing to the phases which the European struggle had assumed. The citizens throughout these changes played but a secondary part, the fate of the city and province being decided, not by them, but by the ships and troops of Holland and England. Nor were the burghers as a whole seriously affected in their civil, religious, or social liberties by the changes. The Dutch and English doubtless suffered in turn from certain heartburnings and jealousies, as they alternately took the lead in managing the local government; but the grievances of the under-party were really mainly sentimental, for on the one hand no material discrimination was ever actually made against either element, and on the other hand the ruler for the time being, whether Dutch *directkor* or English governor, always made both elements feel that compared to him they stood on a common plane of political inferiority.

Sir Edmund Andros was appointed by the English king as the governor who was to receive New York from the hands of Director Colve. This he did formally and in state, many courtesies being exchanged between the outgoing and incoming rulers; among the rest, Colve presented Andros with his own state-coach and the three horses that drew it. Andros at once reinstated the English form of government in both province

and city, and once more, and this time finally, made the English the official language. New York was still considered as a proprietary colony of James; New Jersey was severed from it, and became a distinct province. The city itself, which had numbered some fifteen hundred inhabitants at the date of the original conquest from the Dutch, included about three thousand when English rule was for the second time established.

CHAPTER V.

NEW YORK UNDER THE STUARTS. 1674-1688.

ANDROS was a man of ability and energy, anxious to serve his master the duke, and also anxious to serve the duke's colony, in so far as its interests did not clash with those of the duke himself. He was of course a devoted adherent of the House of Stuart, an ardent Royalist, and a believer in the divine right of kings, and in government by a limited ruling class, not by the great mass of the people governed. Yet, in spite of his imperious and fiery temper, he strove on the whole to do justice to the city of mixed nationalities over whose destinies he for the time being presided, and it throve well under his care. But though he tried to rule fairly, he made it distinctly understood that he, acting in the name of his overlord the duke, was the real and supreme master. The city did not govern itself; for he appointed the mayor, aldermen, and other officers. Even some of his decrees which worked well for the city showed the arbitrary character of his rule, and illustrated the vicious system of monopolies and class and sectional legislation which then obtained. Thus he bestowed on New York the sole right to bolt and export flour. This trebled her wealth

during the sixteen years that elapsed before it was repealed, but it of course caused great hardship to the inland towns. Unmixed good however resulted from his decree putting an end to the practice of holding Indians as slaves.

It might have been expected that after the conquest of New York the incoming English would have been divided by party lines from the Dutch, and that they would have been in strong alliance with their English neighbors to the eastward. The extreme Royalist tone of the new government, and the anti-Puritan or Episcopal feeling of the most influential of the new settlers, were among the main causes which prevented either of these results from being brought about. The English Episcopalians and Royalists hated their sour, gloomy, fanatical countrymen of different belief much more bitterly than they did their well-to-do Dutch neighbors; and the middle-class citizens, Dutch and English alike, were bound together by ties of interest and by the stubborn love of liberty which was common to both races.

The high-handed proceedings of Andros roused more or less openly avowed ill feeling among the poor but independent citizens of all nationalities; and he clashed rather less with the Manhattaners than with the Long Islanders. Moreover, under his rule New York's attitude as regards the Puritan commonwealths of New England continued

as hostile as ever, Andros adopting toward them the exact tone of his Dutch predecessors. He asserted the right of his colony to all land west of the Connecticut. He actually assembled a large body of troops wherewith to subdue the New England towns on its banks, and only halted when it became evident that such a proceeding would without fail be desperately resisted, and would surely bring on an intercolonial war.

Andros was certainly true to his master; yet James became suspicious of him, and, after he had been governor for over six years, suddenly summoned him home, and sent over a special agent, or spy, to examine into the affairs of the colony. Early in January, 1681, Andros left for London, where he speedily cleared his name of all suspicion, and came into high favor once more. New York meanwhile was left under the charge of Lieutenant-Governor Brockholls, a Roman Catholic, and of course a high Tory,—an inefficient man, utterly unable to cope with the situation. He was hampered rather than aided by the duke's special agents, who bungled everything, and soon became the laughing-stock of the population. In consequence, the province speedily fell into a condition not very far removed from anarchy. The traders refused to pay customs duties, and Brockholls was too timid to try to collect them; and the taxes, generally, fell into arrears. Disorderly meetings

were held in various places, and mob violence was threatened,—the Puritan element of course taking the lead. Equally of course, and very properly, the friends of free government took advantage of the confusion to strike a blow for greater liberty. When under a despotic rule which nevertheless secured order and material prosperity, there was small hope of effecting a change; but the instant the tyrant for the time being became weak, there was a chance of success in moving against him, there being no longer, to the minds of the citizens, any substantial offset to atone for his tyranny. Accordingly, a New York jury formally presented to the court that the lack of a Provincial Assembly was a grievance. Popular feeling declared itself so strongly to this effect that the court adopted the same view. Accordingly, it accepted as its own and forwarded to the duke a petition drawn up by the high sheriff of Long Island. This petition set forth that New York had long groaned under the intolerable burden of being subjected to an arbitrary and irresponsible government, whereby the colonists were forced against their wills to pay revenue, while their trade was burdened, and they themselves practically enthralled. The document pointed by way of contrast to the freer and more flourishing colonies by which New York was flanked on either hand, and besought that thereafter the province should be ruled by a governor,

council, and assembly, the latter to be elected by the colonial freeholders.

The stoppage of the collections of taxes caused the colony to become a drain instead of a source of revenue to James; and the duke seriously considered the project of selling such an unproductive province. Finally however he decided, as an alternative, to grant the wished-for franchise, and see if that would improve matters; being, it is said, advised to take this course by William Penn whose not over-creditable connection with the Stuarts occasionally bore good fruit. As the person to put his plans into execution and to act as first governor under the new system, the duke chose Thomas Dongan, a Roman Catholic Irish gentleman of good family, the nephew of the Earl of Tyrconnel. Dongan acted with wise liberality both in matters political and in matters religious, toward the province he was sent to govern; for he was a man of high character and good capacity. Yet it is impossible to say how much of his liberality was due to honest conviction, and how much to the considerations of expediency that at the moment influenced the House of Stuart. It was an age of religious intolerance and of government by privileged classes; and the religion to which Dongan and his royal master adhered was at that time, wherever it was dominant, the bitterest foe of civil and religious liberty. But in England the

nation generally was Episcopalian; and Duke James, a Catholic, was perforce obliged to advocate toleration for all sects as a step toward the ultimate supremacy of his own. So in New York, Dongan the Catholic found himself ruler of a province where there were but a few dozen citizens of his own faith, the mass of the people being stanch Protestants, of several jarring creeds; and he was not drawn by any special bonds of sympathy to the class of crown officials and the like, who were mostly of the very church which in England was supreme over his own. His interests and sympathies thus naturally inclined him to side with the popular party, and to advocate religious liberty. As he was also vigilant in preserving order and warding off outside aggression, and devoted to the well-being of the colony, he proved himself perhaps the best colonial governor New York ever had.

Dongan reached New York in 1683, and from the first was popular with the colonists. He at once issued writs for the election of the members of the long-desired Provincial Assembly. They were elected by the freeholders; and with their meeting, in the fall of the same year, the province took the first real step,—and a very long one,—toward self-government. Dongan of course appointed his own council; and he generally placed thereon representatives of the different nationalities and creeds. New York City was of course the

governmental seat or capital, as well as the metropolis of the province.

The Assembly, the popular branch of the government, consisted of eighteen members, the majority being Dutch. They promptly passed a number of acts, all of which were approved by Dongan and his council. By far the most important, was the special "charter of Liberties and Privileges," granted by the duke to the province. By this the right of self-taxation was reserved to the colonists, except that certain specific duties on importations were allowed to the duke and his heirs. The main features of self-government, so long and earnestly desired by the people, were also secured; and entire liberty of conscience and religion was guaranteed to all. This charter was sent over to the duke, by whose suggestion several small amendments were made therein; he then signed and sealed but did not deliver it. Thus it never formally went into effect; yet the government of New York was carried on under its provisions for several years. One of the acts of this first Assembly was well in line with the policy of extreme liberality toward all foreign-born citizens which New York has always consistently followed: it conferred full rights of citizenship upon all white foreigners who should take the oath of allegiance. The especial purpose of passing the act was to benefit the Huguenots, who were being expelled

from France by tens of thousands, thanks to the cruel bigotry of the French king, Louis XIV.

With the return of order and the dawn of liberty, the city once more began to flourish. Trade increased, the fisheries did well, new buildings were put up, and taxes were paid without grumbling. Addresses of gratitude were sent to the duke, and the citizens were fervent in their praise of Dongan. Even the religious animosities were for the moment softened. The old church in the fort was used every Sunday by the representatives of all three of the leading creeds, the services being held in as many different languages,—the Dutch in the morning, the French at midday, and the English, by the Episcopalians, in the afternoon; while Dongan and his few fellow-religionists worshiped in a little chapel. Even the austere Calvinist dominies could not refrain from paying their meed of respect to the new governor.

As soon as the Assembly adjourned, Dongan granted new "liberties and privileges" to the city itself. In accordance with these new articles, the aldermen were elected by the freeholders in the various wards, the mayor being appointed by the governor. The board of aldermen was a real, not (as in our day) a nominal, legislative body, and enacted by-laws for the government of the city. Some of them were of very stringent character; notably those which provided against any kind

of work or amusement on the Sabbath, and which forbade all assemblages of the numerous negro slaves,—for the slave-holding burghers were haunted by the constant terror of a servile insurrection.

Affairs went on smoothly until the death of Charles II. and the accession to the throne of New York's ducal proprietor, under the title of James II. Dongan made journeys hither and thither through his province, pacifying the Indians, and seeing to the best interests of his own people. He was especially zealous in keeping guard over the northern frontier, already threatened by the French masters of Canada, so long the arch foes of the northeastern English colonies. Although Dongan was a Roman Catholic, he did not show any of that feeling which made some of his co-religionists sacrifice country to creed, nor did he ever become a tool of France, like so many of the Stuart courtiers of his day. On the contrary, he was active in thwarting French intrigues in the north, giving full warning concerning them to his royal master, to whom his active and loyal patriotism could hardly have been altogether pleasant.

At any rate, no sooner had the duke become king than he dropped the mask of liberality, and took up his natural position as a political and religious tyrant. Under the influence of Dongan,

he did indeed grant to the city itself a charter of special rights and privileges, which formed the basis of those subsequently granted in colonial times. The instrument not only confirmed the city in the possession of the privileges it already possessed, but allowed it a large quantity of real estate, from some of which the municipality draws a revenue to the present day, while the rest has been given over for the common use of the people. But on the main point of self-government the king was resolved to retrace his steps. He would not consummate his action giving a liberal charter to the province, and though in 1684 Dongan summoned the Assembly to meet on his own responsibility, it was never thereafter called; and New York's share in self-government came to an end as far as the Stuarts were concerned.

In 1688 Dongan himself was deprived of the control of the province he had ruled so faithfully and wisely. The king was bent upon being absolute master of the colonies no less than of the home country; and in the spring of that year he threw New England, New York, and New Jersey into one province, abolishing all the different charters, and putting the colonists under the direct control of the royal governor. Dongan was too liberal a man to be entrusted with the carrying out of such a policy. Sir Edmund Andros was sent over in his stead, to act as the instrument

for depriving the people of such measure of freedom as they possessed. The bitterness of the religious feeling of the day may be gathered from the fact that many of the more bigoted Protestants of Manhattan actually welcomed the change of governors, being unable to pardon their friend because he was not of their creed, and greeting their foe warmly because, forsooth, they did not quite so widely disagree with his theological tenets.

However, the mass of the people in both New York and New England speedily became welded into one in opposition to the absolutism of the Stuart king, as typified by his lieutenant. Hollander and Puritan were knit together by the bond of a common hatred to the common oppressor; the Puritan as usual taking the lead. They were outraged because of the loss of their political rights; and they feared greatly lest they should soon also lose their religious freedom. Moreover, the colonies were already jealous of one another, and deeply imbued with the Separatist feeling; and they counted the loss of their special charters, and the obliteration of their boundary lines that they might be put under one government, as grievances intolerable and not to be borne. Nor did they have to bear them long. That very year William of Orange landed in England and drove the last Stuart king from his throne. The news reached America early in 1689, when Andros was

in Boston, and the New Englanders rose instantly and threw him into prison, while his governmental fabric throughout the provinces perished almost in a day.

The accession of the Dutch prince to the throne of England added another to the forces that were tending to make the various ethnic elements of New York fuse together. All New Yorkers could be loyal to the Dutch prince who wore an English crown, and who was their special champion against a hostile creed and race. For the next eighty years Holland was England's ally, so that the Hollanders in America saw nothing at work in European politics which should make them unfriendly to their English fellow-citizens; and the one great enemy of both races was France. Their interests and enmities were the same, and were also identical with those of the Huguenots, who formed the third great element in the population. It was this identity of interests and enmities, no less than the similarity in religious belief, which made it possible for the two races already in the land to merge so easily into the third and later-coming race. The comparative rapidity of this fusion in New York is noteworthy. It stands in sharp contrast to the slowness of the intermingling where the English or their successors have conquered and moved into communities of Catholic French and Spaniards.

From 1689 onward, the antagonisms of race were only secondary causes of party and factional hostility in New York. The different nationalities remained far less stubbornly apart than was the case in the neighboring colony of Pennsylvania for instance. Even when the bulk of one nationality was found to be opposed to the bulk of another, the seeming race antagonism was usually merely incidental, the real line of division being drawn with regard to other matters, such as divided the aristocratic and popular parties elsewhere. No element of the population kept obstinately aloof from the rest as did a large section of the Pennsylvanian Germans, to their own lasting harm. The different races gradually grew to speak the same language, and then intermarried and merged together; for in America the intermarriage and fusion of races follows, but does not precede, their adoption of a common tongue. The Revolution and the preliminary agitation greatly hastened this fusion; but it was already well under way before the first mutterings of the Revolution were heard.

CHAPTER VI.

THE USURPATION OF LEISLER. 1689-1691.

THE overthrow of the Stuart dynasty, and the consequent sudden fall of Andros, brought about the collapse of the existing government in New York. There followed a period of turmoil and disorder, marked by a curious party fight and revolution, or rather attempted revolution, which in its various phases well illustrated the peculiar characteristics of New York life.

The relaxing of the bonds of authority allowed the jealousies between the different classes of the population to come to a head. The mass of the citizens,—the men of small means, who in the best of times had enjoyed but little influence in the political life of the colony,—were sullenly hostile to the aristocratic and conservative class of crown officials, patroons, rich merchants, and the like. The ferment in men's minds enormously increased the activity of the forces that were tending to collision. After Andros was imprisoned the conservative faction wished to continue in power the existing officers, appointed by King James, until they could be replaced by others bearing commissions from King William. The popular party, on the other hand, was for immediate action. Their

leaders were inspired by the course of the New England colonies, which had promptly set up their former chartered governments. Their proposal was to turn out all of the Stuart officials, and to put in their places men known to be faithful to the new order of things, who should govern until the will of the Prince of Orange was known. Of course all of the official class and the English Episcopalians, as well as the Hollanders and Huguenots of property, generally took the conservative view; the other was adopted by the poor people and radical liberals and Protestants, very many of the Puritans uniting with the Dutch and French Calvinist working men, small traders, sailors, and farm laborers. The popular party was at first joined by a very large number of respectable men, well-to-do or of small means, who afterward became alienated by the sweeping measures of the extremists and by the fickleness and violence of the mob. The greater number of the citizens whose tongue was French or Dutch were in its ranks, while the aristocratic faction contained a large share of the English element; but the difference was one of caste and instinct, not of speech or race. Indeed, the leaders of the aristocratic wing, after the lieutenant-governor (Nicholson), were the three members of the deposed governor's council, Bayard, Van Cortlandt and Phillipse, all of Dutch birth or ancestry. On

the other hand their opponents were led by a man named Jacob Leisler, who was strongly seconded by his son-in-law, one Jacob Milborne. New York City, then as now, contained within its population many different races only beginning to fuse together; and then as now, the lines of party were only subordinately affected by the lines of race,—each faction possessing representatives of all the different elements, while the leaders were found, as is still the case, among men of diverse origin and nationality. Religious animosities, as ever since, had much effect in sharpening party differences.

Leisler was a merchant of property, a deacon in the Dutch Reformed Church, and a captain of one of the six militia trainbands over which Bayard was colonel. He was a zealous Protestant and Republican, a fanatical hater of the Roman Catholic Church, and only less opposed to the Episcopacy of the English. He seems to have been an earnest man, of much power and energy, honest in his purpose to help the poorer people and to put down civil and religious tyranny. It is easy to imagine circumstances in which he would have done much good to the community wherein he lived. But he was of coarse, passionate nature, and too self-willed and vain not to have his head turned by sudden success and the possession of power. Moreover, like most popular leaders of

his stamp, the very sincerity of his convictions made him feel that the cause of the people was indeed his own, and therefore that the converse of the proposition was also true. Such a man when he himself becomes a ruler is of course likely to continue to exercise against the people the very qualities which in the beginning he has exercised on their behalf; and this without any, or at most with but little, conscious change of intent. Yet with all Leisler's faults it must be remembered that fundamentally he was right, for he struggled to procure enlarged liberties for the people.

The tyranny of King James had been two sided, —he had striven to make the power of the sovereign absolute, and less directly, to make the Romish Church arbiter of men's consciences. The New York commonalty detested his officers, both as representing the civil power that actually had oppressed them and as standing for the religious power that possibly would oppress them. They naturally bore especial hatred to such of the officials as were Catholics; and it was this feeling that brought about the first break between the popular party and the upholders of the existing order of things.

Leisler imported a cargo of wine from Europe, but refused to pay the duties on the ground that the collector of the port was a Catholic. The council sided with the collector, and high words passed

between them and Leisler, ending with a furious quarrel and the interchange of threats. The common folk at once made the cause of the recalcitrant wine merchant their own, and adopted him as their champion,—a position for which he was well fitted by his truculent daring and energy. Many wild stories were afloat as to the plots which were being concocted by the governmental officers, whom most of the citizens firmly believed to be under the influence of the Catholics, and in secret league with the fallen monarch. It was rumored, now that they were about to surrender the city to the French, now that they were plotting to procure an uprising of the Catholics and massacre of the Protestants. As the latter outnumbered the former twenty to one, this fear shows the state of foolish panic to which the people had been wrought; but foolish or not, their excitement kept rising, and they became more and more angry and uneasy.

The outbreak was finally precipitated by a misunderstanding between the governing authorities and some of the trainbands; for the latter had been called in to assist the handful of regular troops who were on guard in the fort. The quarrel arose over a question of discipline between the lieutenant-governor and the militia officers. The former chafed under the suspicions of the citizens, —which he was perhaps conscious that he merited,

at least to the extent of being but a lukewarm supporter of the new order of things,—and lacked the tact to handle himself properly in such an emergency. He ended by bursting into a passion, and dismissing the militia officers from his presence with the remark that he would rather see the town on fire than be commanded by them.

This was the spark to the train. The indignant militiamen were soon spreading the report that the governor had threatened in their presence to burn the town. The burghers readily believed the truth of the statement, and under Leisler's lead determined to take the reins of the government into their own hands. At noon of May 31, 1689, Leisler summoned the citizens to arms by beat of drum, mustering his own trainband before his house. The suddenness of the movement, and Leisler's energy, paralyzed opposition. The lieutenant-governor yielded up the fort, no time being given him to prepare for resistance; and the city council were speedily overawed by the militia, who marched into their presence as they sat in the City Hall. The popular party for the first time was in complete control of the city.

There was much justification for this act of the common people and their leaders. Doubtless their fears for their own lives and property were exaggerated; but there was good ground for uneasiness so long as the city was under the control of the

Stuart adherents. The exiled House of Stuart became at once the active ally of the most bitter enemies of England, Holland, and their colonies. King James identified his cause with that of the Church and the nation from whose triumph the New Yorkers had most to fear. Many of the officers whom he had left in high places proved willing to betray their countrymen for the sake of their king; and even attempted treachery might bring manifold and serious evils upon a small colonial city like New York. If there was really but little danger from the Catholics, there was beyond question a great deal to be feared from the French; and all those who held commissions from the House of Stuart, if they were loyal to the king who had appointed them, were bound to render assistance to the common public enemy, France. Leisler and the burghers were on the whole right in feeling that they were warranted in overthrowing the old government. In this they were supported, at least passively, by the bulk even of the conservative citizens; they were opposed chiefly by the rich and aristocratic families, who were hostile to all popular movements, and perhaps leaned secretly to the side of the Stuarts and absolute government. Of course the timid and wealthy persons of no convictions objected to change of any sort. Had Leisler contented himself with merely establishing a temporary govern-

ment to preserve order and ward off outside aggression until the new officials should arrive from England, he would have deserved the good-will of all the citizens.

Unfortunately, he lacked the self-restraint and clear-sightedness necessary to the pursuit of such a course; and he speedily established as arbitrary and unjust a government as that he overthrew. For a short time he ruled wisely and with moderation, oppressing no one. Then his head became turned by his position. He was always boasting of his feat in, as he asserted, saving the city from destruction; and he kept comparing himself to Cromwell, announcing that to rescue the people from their oppressors, there was need of sword-rule in New York. The English Episcopalians naturally detested his sway from the beginning, as did those wealthy French and Dutch families that had previously possessed a share of the governing power. All of these people were closely watched; and though at first not actually molested, they soon began to suffer petty oppression and injustice at the hands of the rougher of Leisler's lieutenants. As they grew more set against Leisler their hatred was repaid in kind. From time to time both their persons and their property were put in actual jeopardy by some freak of jealous suspicion or wounded vanity on the part of the popular dictator. The mass of the people did

not care much for the ills that befell these first sufferers; but before many months were over, they themselves were forced to bear their share of unjust treatment, and then of course they became very loud in their indignation. Leisler was doubtless in part actuated by honest distrust of his opponents, and belief that he himself could do most good to the city and especially to the common folk, and in part by the ambitions to which his success had given birth. He found it difficult to know where to stop in pursuing his dictatorial policy. His suspicion of the Episcopalians grew to include the Puritans. His animosity toward the aristocratic families was far from being altogether causeless; for they were undoubtedly bitterly hostile not only to him but to the popular cause he represented. But he soon began to confound his aristocratic enemies with the people of means generally; and his baser supporters, under plea of enthusiasm for Protestantism and liberty, menaced indiscriminately every man of property, so that all the most thrifty and successful people of the community, including the Dutch and Huguenot clergy, became banded together against him. The decent working men also grew alarmed at his excesses and irritated at the pride he displayed and at the insolence of some of his subordinates, their own former equals.

Soon after Leisler had overthrown the lieuten-

ant-governor and taken the reins of power, a royal proclamation was brought over which continued in office all Protestant officials. The old council greeted this proclamation with exultation, for if obeyed it restored them to office; but Leisler, fearing for his life if his foes returned to power, and furious at seeing his work thus undone, determined to disobey the command of the sovereigns, treasonable though such conduct was. At the head of his troops he dispersed the council, and continued his own appointees in place. The mob was at this time heartily in his favor, and cheered on the trainbands; and finally Bayard and Van Cortlandt were chased from the city.

Leisler had summoned a convention which, when it met, contained of course only the extreme men; not a few of its members were Republicans, or avowed adherents to the policy of Oliver Cromwell. They chose a committee of safety, ten in number, consisting of Hollanders, Huguenots, and English Puritans. They were all furious Protestants and ultra liberals; and they speedily nominated Leisler as commander-in-chief, with extensive and indeed arbitrary powers. Soon afterward a letter was received from the sovereigns which was directed to the "commander-in-chief" of the province of New York. It was meant for Nicholson whom the home government supposed to be still in power, but by an oversight

his name was not put in the document; and the delighted Leisler insisted that he himself was the man for whom it was intended. He promptly assumed the title of lieutenant-governor, chose his own council, and formally entered on his duties as the royal representative and ruler of the colony. He treated the city as under martial law, yet in certain matters he showed his leaning toward democracy. Thus instead of appointing a mayor he allowed the freeholders to elect one,—the first, and until 1834, the last elective mayor of New York. The opposition to his rule outside of Manhattan Island was very strong from the outset; and Albany, under the lead of Schuyler, refused to recognize his authority until forced to do so by the pressing danger from the Canadian French and their savage allies.

In outside matters the usurping governor showed breadth of mind,—notably in calling a congress of the colonies, the first of its kind, which met in New York in the spring of 1690. The purpose of the meeting was to plan a joint attack on Canada; for Count Frontenac's war-parties were cruelly harassing the outlying settlements of both New York and New England. A small army of Connecticut men and New Yorkers was assembled, and marched to the head of Lake Champlain, but owing to mismanagement accomplished nothing; and the expedition was finally aban-

doned after a bitter quarrel between Leisler and his New England allies. Nothing against France was accomplished beyond a couple of brilliant raids made by Schuyler up to the walls of Montreal, and the capture of a number of French ships by Leisler's New York privateers. Yet, though this intercolonial congress produced such small results, it marks an era in the growth of the provinces which afterward became the United States. It was the first occasion on which the colonies ever showed the least tendency to act together, or on which they appeared as aught but a jumble of mutually hostile communities. Up to this time their several paths of development had been entirely separate, and their interests independent and usually conflicting; but after this date they had a certain loose connection with one another, and it becomes possible to treat their history in some degree as a whole.

In domestic affairs, Leisler sometimes did well and sometimes ill. He summoned two popular assemblies. They were filled with his supporters, ratified all his acts, and gave him power to go to any lengths he chose. He allowed his subordinates to maltreat the Long Islanders, Dutchmen and Puritans alike, who accordingly sent long petitions for redress to England. He opened letters, plundered houses, confiscated estates to satisfy taxes, and imprisoned numbers of the lead-

ing citizens whom he believed to be his enemies. He treated the Calvinist dominies as roughly as their flocks, and all the men of property became greatly alarmed. The leading Dutch and French citizens made common cause with the English, and sent a vigorous remonstrance to the home government praying for relief, and denouncing Leisler as an "insolent alien" who had tyrannized over the city, holding the lives and property of all citizens at his mercy, and setting up as rulers men of the meanest station and capacity, and often of criminal antecedents. Doubtless much of this opposition was due merely to an aristocratic dislike of anything like democracy; but Leisler's "government of the people" had beyond question begun to degenerate into government by the mob and by a tyrant. His overbearing conduct alienated the mass of the mechanics, craftsmen, and laborers; and he was soon left unsupported save by the men he had put in office, and by the militia, in whose ranks he had left only his own adherents.

The repeated petitions of the citizens attracted the attention of King William; and to stop the disorders a governor (Sloughter) and a lieutenant-governor (Ingoldsby) were duly commissioned, and sent out to the colony with an adequate force of regular troops. The ship carrying the governor was blown out of its course; and when Ingoldsby, early in February, 1691, landed on Manhattan

Island, Leisler refused to recognize his authority. The mass of the citizens supported Ingoldsby, while the militia stood by Leisler. For six weeks the two parties remained under arms, threatening each other, Ingoldsby's headquarters being in the City Hall and Leisler's in the fort. Then a skirmish took place in which several of Ingoldsby's regulars were killed or wounded, while Leisler's militia, shielded by the fort, escaped unharmed. The very day after this, Governor Sloughter's ship appeared in the harbor, and he immediately landed and took command. The following morning Leisler's militia deserted him, and he and his chief officers were promptly seized and imprisoned. They were tried for high treason, and Leisler and Milborne, the two ringleaders, were adjudged guilty and hanged; most of the respectable citizens, including the clergymen of every denomination, demanding their death as affording the only warrant for the future safety of the colony. The Leislerian or democratic party was cowed, and for the moment did nothing save feebly and ineffectually to protest against the execution of the sentence.

The popular party of New York had certainly failed to show governmental capacity, moderation toward opponents, or power to curb the oppressive tyranny of its own leaders. Its downfall was as complete as the triumph of the aristocratic ele-

ment. The government of the colony was at once put on the basis on which it stood until the outbreak of the Revolution. There was a governor appointed by the king, and a council likewise appointed; while the Assembly was elected by the freeholders. The suffrage was thus limited by a strict property qualification. Liberty of conscience was granted to all Protestant sects, but not to the Catholics; and the Church of England was practically made the State Church, though the Dutch and French congregations were secured in the rights guaranteed them by treaty. It was thus essentially a class or aristocratic government, —none the less so because to European eyes the little American aristocracy seemed both poor and rude. In a frontier community such as New York then was, it was comparatively easy for any man to acquire property and position, and thus step into the ranks of the relatively large ruling class.[1]

[1] Many of the leading families in colonial times were descended from the Old World gentry. Many others sprang from successful adventurers of almost unknown ancestry; and there was every gradation between these two extremes. The Livingstons, for instance, one of the really noted New York families, were descended from a young Scotch factor, just like hundreds of penniless, pushing young Scotchmen who have come to this country in the steerage of sailing-ship or steamer during the present century. Of the men of high social standing in the Old World who came over to make their fortunes in the New, probably the majority failed, and their descendants slipped down into the lower ranks of the population.

Nevertheless, democracy, as such, had small share in the government.

However, the Leislerians soon plucked up heart, and appeared once more in public, claiming their fallen chief as a martyr, and troubling their foes for a generation ere they gradually lost their identity and became merged in the general mass of the popular party. Though this element of the population, owing to the restricted suffrage, possessed less than its due weight in the government, yet it always had allies and mouthpieces in the Assembly. These advocates of popular rights rarely made a fight for the granting of political power to the masses, but they were kept busy in battling against the prerogatives of the Crown and the power of the great patroons and rich merchants. For the next three quarters of a century the struggle for popular rights in New York took the form, not of a demand for democratic government and manhood suffrage, but of a contest waged on behalf of the men of small property against the authority of a foreign monarchy and the rule of a native oligarchy.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GROWTH OF THE COLONIAL SEAPORT. 1691-1720.

FOR three quarters of a century after the collapse of Leisler's rebellion the internal and external politics of New York City ran in monotonous grooves, and were largely merged in those of the province, the interests of the town and country being as a rule identical. There was a succession of long wars with France, the New Yorkers, like the other English colonists, and like England herself, soon coming to look upon the French as their hereditary and natural foes. This continuous struggle with a powerful common enemy was a potent cause in keeping the colonists of Manhattan, like those of the rest of America, loyal to the mother country; and the growth of sentiments and interests hostile to the latter, though steady, was unappreciated even by the colonists themselves. Their internal politics were marked by unceasing struggles in the Assembly,—struggles, sometimes between the aristocratic and popular factions, sometimes between one or the other or both of these factions and whoever happened for the time to represent the Crown. The overthrow of the Stuart dynasty had resulted in

an immense gain for liberty, and for free and orderly government in New York. The last Stuart king had never granted the liberties he had promised to the colonists; but by his successor they were immediately given in full. Hitherto New York's share in self-government had depended purely on the pleasure of her successive rulers. Under and owing to William of Orange, she made the first noteworthy advance in the direction of self-government by right, irrespective of the views of the royal governor who might be over her.

Throughout all this period New York was a little seaport town, without manufactures, and dependent upon ocean industries for her well-being. There was little inland commerce; everything was done by shipping. The merchants were engaged in the river trade with Albany and the interior, in the coast trade with the neighboring colonies, in the fisheries, and in the sea trade with England, Africa, and the East and West Indies. Every few years there occurred a prolonged maritime war with either France or Spain, and sometimes with both. Then the seas were scourged and the coasts vexed by the war-ships and privateers of the hostile powers; and the intervals of peace were troubled by the ravages of pirate and picaroon. Commerce was not a merely peaceful calling; and those who went down to the sea in ships led troublous lives.

The seafaring folk, or those whose business was connected with theirs, formed the bulk of New York's white population. The poor man went to sea in the vessel the richer man built or owned or commanded; and where the one risked life and limb, the other at least risked his fortune and future. Many of the ventures were attended with great danger even in times of peace. Besides the common risks of storm and wreck, other and peculiar perils were braved by the ships that sailed for the Guinea Coast, to take part in the profitable but hideously brutal and revolting trade for slaves. The traffic with the strange coast cities of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean likewise had dangers all its own. Pirate and sultan and savage chief had all to be guarded against, and sometimes outwitted, and sometimes outfought.

Moreover, the New York merchants and seamen were themselves ready enough to risk their lives and money in enterprises where the profits to be gained by peaceful trade came second, and those by legal warfare or illegal plundering first. In every war the people plunged into the business of privateering with immense zest and eagerness. New York Province dreaded the Canadians and Indians, but New York City feared only the fleets of France; her burghers warred, as well as traded, chiefly on the ocean. Privateering was a species of gambling which combined the certainty of

exciting adventure with the chance of enormous profit, and it naturally possessed special attractions for the bolder and more reckless spirits. Many of the merchants who fitted out privateers lost heavily, but many others made prizes so rich that the profits of ordinary voyages sank into insignificance by comparison. Spanish treasure-ships, and French vessels laden with costly stuffs from the West Indies or the Orient, were brought into New York Harbor again and again,—often after fights to the severity of which the battered hulls of both the captor and the vanquished vessel bore unequivocal testimony. When the prize was very rich and the crew of the privateer large, the home-coming of the latter meant a riot; for in such a case the flushed privateersmen celebrated their victory with wild orgies and outrages, and finally had to be put down by actual battle in the streets. The landowners were often merchants as well; and more than one of them was able to flank the gateway of his manor-house with the carved prows and figure-heads of the vessels his own privateers had captured.

In time of war both risk and profit were great, yet they were but little less in the short periods of peace, or rather of truce. Under the system of jealous trade-exclusion which then obtained, each trader was a possible smuggler, and the cruisers of every naval power were always harassing the

merchantmen sailing under rival flags. Even if a vessel did not smuggle, she was liable at any moment to be seized on the pretext that she was trying to; and so, as she had to undergo the dangers in any event, she felt no reluctance in attempting to gather the profits when occasion offered. Again, the line dividing the work of the privateer from the work of the pirate was easy to overstep, and those who employed the one were not reluctant at times to profit by the deeds of the other. The pirate merely continued in somewhat exaggerated form against all nations, at all times, the practices which the privateer employed against certain nations at certain times. There were plenty of both merchants and seamen in New York who failed to draw any nice distinction between the two classes of vessels; and the full-armed, strongly manned trading-ship, which alone was employed in the more perilous water-paths of commerce, and which was always ready to do privateering work in time of actual war, in time of peace was not unapt to hoist the black flag for the nonce in distant seas, or at least to barter freely with the acknowledged pirates. The slavers in particular, whose crews and captains were sure to be rough, hardened, greedy men, wonted to bloodshed and violence, were very likely to turn pirate as occasion offered; while the pirates were equally willing to engage in the slave-trade, and

to sell their living cargoes to the regular slavers, or to attack the latter, as circumstances dictated. The lawlessness was greatest in the Oriental seas. The huge Arab and Indian coasters, freighted with rare and precious stuffs, were sought after with furious eagerness by both pirate and privateer; while the former also swooped down on the Dutch and English East Indiamen. At Madagascar there was a regular fort and station to which some of the New York merchants sent ships for the sole purpose of trading with the pirate vessels who carried their ill-gotten goods thither. Many a daring skipper who obeyed the law fairly well in Atlantic waters, felt free to do as he wished when he neared Madagascar, or cruised through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. The rich cargoes of Oriental goods, the spices, perfumes, silks, shawls, rugs, pearls, and golden coin and jewels, were of such value that men did not care to ask too closely how they were acquired. There were plenty of adventurous young New Yorkers, of good blood, who were themselves privateersmen, Red-Sea men, or slavers; and in the throng of seafaring men of this type, the crews and captains of the pirate ships passed unchallenged. The taverns and low houses along the water-front of the little seaport were filled with wind-roughened sailor-folk, outlandish in speech and dress, wild of look, black of heart, and ripe for any desperate venture. Their

dare-devil commanders were not only tolerated but welcomed as guests at the houses of many among the gentry and merchants, who had themselves in one way or another gained great profit from lawless ocean warfare. Their mad freaks and furious orgies and carouses made them the terror of quiet people; but their lavish extravagance with their stores of strange Spanish, Indian, and Arabian coin gave them also a certain popularity.

The goods brought from the far eastern lands by these men, and by their fellow sea-rovers of slightly stricter morality, gave a touch of quaint luxury, and their own presence added an air of dash and adventure, to the life of the growing town on Manhattan Island. There was a suggestion of the Orient and of hazardous fortunes, ill made and lightly lost, in the costly goods with which the rich burghers and manorial lords decked their roomy houses, and clothed themselves and their wives. The dress of the time was picturesque; and the small social world of New York, as haughty and exclusive after its own fashion as any, looked leniently on the men whose deeds made it possible for the titled Crown officials, and the untitled leaders of the local oligarchy, alike, to go clad in rich raiment. More than one sea-chief of doubtful antecedents held his head high among the New York people of position, on the infrequent occasions

when he landed to revel and live at ease, while his black-hulled, rakish craft was discharging her cargo at the wharves, or refitting for another mysterious voyage. The grim-visaged pirate captain, in his laced cap, rich jacket, and short white knee-trunks, with heavy gold chains round his neck, and jewel-hilted dagger in belt, was a striking and characteristic feature of New York life at the close of the seventeenth century. Soon afterward the boldness and the serious nature of the piratical ravages thoroughly roused the home government, which made resolute efforts to stop them. The colonial authorities joined to hunt the rovers from their coasts; and though the men of the black flag continued to ply their trade in tropical seas, they never after that time appeared in the colonial seaports save by stealth.

The favor shown to the pirates brought scandal on the name of more than one royal governor of New York. This was especially the case with Gov. Benjamin Fletcher, a stout, florid soldier of fortune, who came over to take control in 1692, the year after the tragic end of Leisler's rebellion. He possessed both energy and courage, but was utterly unfitted for a civil post of such difficulty as that to which he was now appointed. Being a fawning courtier to the king, he naturally took a tone of insolent command in dealing with the colony. Though very strict in religious observances

he was a loose liver, fond of luxury, and of extravagant habits; he was therefore continually in want of money, and both he and some of his council were in the habit of receiving valuable gifts—amounting to blackmail—from the different pirate ships. Finally, the scandal grew so great that he was recalled.

Other causes, however, contributed to bring about the recall. Fletcher was a stanch supporter of the colonial aristocracy, and bitterly opposed to the popular party. He interfered actively against the latter in the elections for the General Assembly, and helped to achieve a triumph which was largely due to wholesale intimidations,—for the partisans of the governor and the richer classes mobbed their opponents, and in many places drove them by force from the polling-booths. He granted the public lands right and left, doing his best to divide the soil of the province among a few rich families. He thus sought to build up a system of gigantic tenant-farmed estates, instead of allowing the country to become filled with small freehold farmers. He also connived at the acquisition by private individuals of great tracts of land from the Indians; and his grants were made to ministers and churches as well as to laymen. In short, his whole theory was to depress the freemen of small means, and to concentrate power and wealth in the hands of the Church and the

aristocracy; and according to his capacities he was an unwholesome and vicious force in the body politic.

For some of Fletcher's acts, however, there was at least much excuse; and in certain of the wrangles in which he became engaged, his opponents behaved no better than he did. Thus, he allowed the merchants to evade the iron laws of trade. He probably winked at these evasions, partly from dislike of trouble, partly, perhaps, from worse motives; but it may be that he felt some genuine impatience with the restrictions by which the merchants of England sought to hem in the growth of the colonies and to keep their trade solely for the benefit of the ruling country. As regards most articles, the colonists could only trade outright with England, and the consequent loss to the merchants was immense. Of course, such a system put a premium on smuggling, and, for the matter of that, on trading with pirates, too, and on every other method by which the laws could be evaded. Yet these same laws were so in accord with the spirit of the time that there was little open protest against them, though they doubtless contributed to the growth of the vague feeling of discontent with the home government which gradually crept into colonial hearts. On the other hand the Assembly, or popular branch of the colonial legislature, was always striving to

throw, as nearly as might be, the whole burden of colonial defense on the British Crown and Parliament; and its selfishness, short-sightedness, and very moderate ability, together with its unlimited capacity for ignoble squabbling, spake but ill for the body of electors to whose suffrages it owed its being. The different colonies, moreover, cared not a jot for one another's misfortunes. Well-settled, thriving New England was quite content to let thinly-settled, struggling New York get on as best she might when almost overwhelmed by the Canadians and Indians. The Puritan commonwealths were well pleased to have such a buffer between them and French aggression. They looked on with cold and selfish indifference until the danger was brought home directly to their own thresholds; the money-making spirit was as yet too strong in their breasts to leave room for more generous and disinterested emotions. Fletcher spent much of his time in a wordy warfare with the New Englanders, because of their desertion of New York, and in quarreling with the Assembly of the latter province for its multifarious misdeeds, and especially for the heinous sin of endeavoring to whittle down his own salary. He was recalled to England early in 1698.

Fletcher's successor was a nobleman of strong and high character, the Earl of Bellomont,—a man of pure life and strict honor, and altogether of far

nobler type than the average colonial governor. He belonged to that limited class in the English aristocracy which combined intense pride and exclusiveness in social matters with a genuine belief in popular liberty and political equality, and a dislike of privilege and privileged castes. He seems to have clearly seen that the establishment in New York of an oligarchy such as Fletcher and the wealthy citizens in general dreamed of, meant injustice to the mass of the people for the time being, and therefore in the end an uprising, and the destruction of the iniquitous system by violence. His duty appeared to him plain; and he attacked the intrenched evils with the utmost resolution. It was an uphill struggle, for the most powerful interests of the colony were banded against him; and, moreover, in dealing with men his tact was not equal to his courage and probity.

Bellomont at once espoused the cause of the Leislerians, the champions of the common people; and during his three years' rule in New York the popular party was uppermost. He even had the bodies of Leisler and Milborne disinterred and buried again with all honor. From the outset he was forced into an unrelenting war on many of the public officials, who were given over to financial dishonesty and bribe-taking, being in corrupt collusion with the merchants, pirates, and smugglers; for the whole governmental service had become

thoroughly debauched. He enforced the laws of trade with rigid severity, put down smuggling, and checked in every way the unscrupulous greed of the great merchants. He also hunted away the pirates, and hung those whom he caught in chains on the different headlands of the coast; and it was while engaged in this pursuit that there occurred the curious incident of his connection with the famous Captain Kidd. The latter was a daring seaman who, when the earl first knew him, bore a good character, as seafaring characters went, and readily fell in with the earl's plans for pirate-hunting. Finally the earl, in company with several other English noblemen, and with one New Yorker, Livingston, the founder of a line of manorial lords, agreed to fit out Kidd for a cruise against the pirates, whose haunts he well knew. All were to go shares in whatever plunder might be obtained from the ships of the captured freebooters. Kidd's proposed enterprise attracted much attention, and as he was given a fine bark he found no difficulty in manning her with a crew better fitted for warlike than peaceful pursuits. He cruised after pirates for some time, but with indifferent success; whereupon he philosophically turned pirate himself, and became one of the scourges of the ocean. He still haunted the New York and New England coast at times, landing in out-of-the-way havens,and burying his blood-stained treasure

on lonely beaches and islands; and finally the earl caught his backsliding friend, who was shortly afterward hung in chains at Execution Dock. The peculiar circumstances attendant upon Kidd's turning pirate attracted widespread attention, though his exploits were, in reality, less remarkable than those of scores of other freebooters. He became a favorite subject for ballads, and gradually grew to be accepted in the popular mind as the archetype of his kind; while the search for his buried treasure, having been successful in one or two instances, became almost a recognized industry among the more imaginative of the dwellers by the sea.

Bellomont distinctly perceived the vast evils produced by the system of huge landed estates; and on behalf of the small freeholders he fearlessly attacked the manorial lords. He forfeited such of their grants as he considered to have been illegally secured; no inconsiderable number when the estates fraudulently purchased from the Indians were added to those acquired by judicious presents to the Crown officials. His aim was ultimately to establish the rule that no one estate larger than a thousand acres should be permitted. In attacking laymen he did not spare the Church; and assailed alike the excessive land-grants of the Dutch Reformed clergy and the Anglican bodies. His term of office was too short to permit him to put

his far-reaching plans into execution; nevertheless, he did accomplish something of what he was aiming at.

Naturally Bellomont aroused the intense hostility of all the powerful, favored classes he had attacked. Almost every great landowner and rich merchant, every corrupt Crown official, every man who had thriven by smuggling and by winking at piracy, assailed him with venomous anger. His character stood so high, however, that these attacks could not shake him in the esteem of the home powers; while the common people loved and reverenced him exceedingly, and mourned him with bitter regret when in 1701 he died, after a short rule of three years.

There followed a period of the utmost confusion, the Leislerian and aristocratic factions coming almost to civil war; for the former had been raised to power by Bellomont, but now lacked his restraining hand, and feared the speedy triumph of the oligarchy under some new governor. The culminating points were reached in the trial of two of the aristocratic leaders for alleged treason, and in a disorderly election for aldermen in New York. Both parties claimed the victory in this election, the voting in many of the precincts being distinguished by the most flagrant fraud; and all the contending aldermen proceeded to try to take their seats at the same time, the resulting riot

being ended by a compromise. In 1702, when Queen Anne had just ascended the throne, her nephew, Lord Cornbury, came out as governor. He promptly restored order by putting down the Leislerians; and by his influence the aristocracy were once more placed in power. To say truth, the popular party, by its violence, and the corruption of some of its chiefs, had done much to forfeit the good-will of the respectable middle classes.

Cornbury, however, did the democracy a good turn by forthwith drowning the memory of its shortcomings in the torrent of his own follies and misdeeds. He was very nearly an ideal example of what a royal governor should not be. He was both silly and wicked. He hated the popular party, and in all ways that he could he curtailed the political rights of the people. He favored the manorial lords and rich merchants as against the commonalty; but he did all he could to wrong even these favorites when it was for his own interest to do so. He took bribes, very thinly disguised as gifts. He was always in debt, and was given to debauchery of various kinds. One of his amusements was to masquerade in woman's garments, being, of all things, inordinately proud that when thus dressed he looked like Queen Anne. He added bigotry to his other failings, and persecuted the Presbyterians, who were endeavoring to get

a foothold in the colony; he imprisoned their ministers and confiscated their little meeting-houses. In this respect, however, he was but a shade worse than the men he ruled over; for the Assembly had passed a law condemning to death all Catholic priests found in the colony,—a law of which the wickedness was neither atoned for nor justified by the fact that the same measure of iniquity was meted out to the Protestants in the countries where the Catholics had control. He appropriated to other uses the moneys furnished by the Assembly to put New York harbor into a state of defense; the result being that a French war-ship once entered the lower bay and threw the whole city into terror. Finally, the citizens of all parties became so exasperated against him as to clamorously demand his removal, which was granted in 1708; but before he left the colony he had been thrown into prison for debt. In dealing with him the Assembly took very high ground in regard to the right of the colony to regulate its own affairs, insisting on the right of the popular branch of the government to fix the taxes, and to appoint most of the public officers and regulate their fees. Resolutions of this character show that during the score of years which had elapsed since the downfall of the Stuarts, the colony had made giant strides toward realizing its own rights and powers. With all their faults, the Leislerians

had done good service in arousing the desire for freedom, and in teaching men—if often only by painful example and experience—to practise the self-restraint which is as necessary as self-confidence to any community desirous of doing its own governmental work.

After a couple of years of practical interregnum, New York received another governor, one Robert Hunter, whose term lasted until 1720. He was a wise and upright man, who did justice to all, though, if anything, favoring the popular party. But the personality of the governor was rapidly becoming of less and less consequence to New York as the city and province grew in size. The condition of the colony and the policy of the British King and Parliament were the really important factors of the problem.

About this time there was a great influx of Germans from the Rhine provinces. They were poor peasants who had fled from before the French armies; and while most went on into the country, a considerable number remained in New York, to add one more to the many elements in its population. As they were ignorant and poverty-stricken, the colonists of English, Dutch, and Huguenot blood looked down on and despised them, not wholly without reason. One feature of the settlement of America is that each mass of immigrants feels much distrust and contempt for

the mass—usually of a different nationality—which comes a generation later. Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland began to straggle in, were allowed to build a church, and got a firm foothold. There was an insurrection of negro slaves, of which more anon.

The city was growing slowly. English, Dutch, and Huguenot names succeeded one another in the mayoralty, showing that there was no attempt on the part of one race to exclude the others from their share of political power. The mass of the people were not very well off, and grudged taxes; the annual expenditure of the city government was only about £300 and was covered by the annual income. The Assembly was already dabbling in paper money, and it had been found necessary to pass poor-laws, and authorize the arrest of street beggars.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOSING OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD. 1720-1764.

IN 1710 New York City contained some 6,000 inhabitants, in 1750 over 12,000, and at the outbreak of the Revolution about 20,000. It was a smaller town than either Boston or Philadelphia, with a society far less democratic, and divided by much sharper lines of caste. Strangers complained, then as now, that it was difficult to say what a typical New Yorker was, because New York's population was composed of various races, differing widely in blood, religion, and conditions of life. In fact, this diversity has always been the dominant note of New York. No sooner has one set of varying elements been fused together than another stream has been poured into the crucible. There probably has been no period in the city's growth during which the New Yorkers whose parents were born in New York formed the majority of the population; and there never has been a time when the bulk of the citizens were of English blood.

All this is in striking contrast to what has gone on in some other American cities, as, for instance, Boston. Colonial Boston was a Puritan English town, where the people were in all essentials won-

derfully like one another. New York, however, never was really an English town, and its citizens always differed radically among themselves in morals, manners, and physical well-being, no less than in speech, blood, and creed. From time to time new ethnic elements have made their appearance, but the change has been not from one race to another, but from one mixture of races to another.

Of course there are very sharp points of contrast other than those of mere size and growth between colonial New York and the New York of the United States. The three leading religious denominations of the present United States had but small and scanty followings in colonial times. In New York, just prior to the Revolution, the Methodists and Baptists had but a small meeting-house apiece, and the handful of Catholics no recognized place of worship whatever; whereas at the present day the Methodists and Baptists form the two leading and characteristic denominations in the country districts of America, while Catholicism has forged to the front in the cities.

In eighteenth-century New York both the Quakers and Jews had places of worship. The Germans had one Lutheran and one Calvinistic Church; but the German pre-revolutionary immigrants did not produce many men of note, and their congregations remained small and unprogressive, their young men of spirit drifting off to

other churches as they learned English. The Presbyterian congregations, on the other hand, throve apace, in spite of the petty and irritating persecution of the Episcopalians. They received many recruits from the Scotch and Scotch-Irish immigrants; and to a man they were all zealous upholders of popular rights, and truculently defiant toward Great Britain. The Irish of that day were already a prominent element of New York life; but they were Presbyterians, not Catholics. They celebrated Saint Patrick's day with enthusiasm, and their toasts to Ireland and America, together with their scarcely veiled hostility to England, would not be out of place on similar occasions at present; but some of their other toasts, such as those to the memory of King William and to the Protestant succession, would scarcely appeal to a Milesian patriot nowadays.

The Huguenots were assimilated more easily than any other element of the population, and produced on the whole the highest grade of citizens. By the middle of the century the Hollanders likewise had begun to speak English. It was the official language of the colony, and the young men of push, who wished to make their mark in the world, had to learn it in order to succeed. The conservative men, the sticklers for old ways and customs, clung obstinately to Dutch; and the consequence was that the energetic young people

began to leave the Dutch churches, and to join the Episcopalian and Presbyterian congregations in constantly increasing numbers,—doing exactly what we see being done by the Scandinavian and German Lutherans in portions of the Northwest at the present day. The drain was so serious that in 1764, as the only means of putting a stop thereto, it was decided to hold the church services in both English and Dutch; and forty years afterward Dutch was entirely abandoned. These measures arrested the decay of the Dutch Reformed Church, and prevented its sharing the fate of total extinction which befell the Swedish Lutheran bodies on the Delaware; but they were not taken in time to prevent the church from falling much behind the place which it should have occupied, taking into account the numbers, intelligence, and morality of its members,—for throughout the colonial period the Dutch remained the largest of the many elements in New York's population.

As the wealthy Dutch and Huguenot families assimilated themselves to the English, they intermarried with them, and in many cases joined the Episcopal Church; though a considerable number, especially among those whose affiliations were with the popular party, remained attached to one or the other of the Calvinist bodies. The Episcopal Church—or, as it was then the Church of

England—was the fashionable organization, the one to which the Crown officials belonged, and the center round which the court party rallied. Among its members were to be found most of the influential people,—the manorial lords and large merchants, who controlled the affairs of the colony, and were the social and political leaders. It claimed to be in a sense the State Church, and had many immunities and privileges; and as far as it could, though only in petty fashion, it oppressed the dissenting bodies,—notably the Presbyterians, who were not, like the Huguenots and Hollanders, protected by treaty. When King's College, now Columbia, was founded by the colony, it was put under the control of the Church of England, and was made in a small way a seat of Tory feeling. The various Protestant bodies were all filled with sour jealousy of one another, and were only united in cordial hatred of the Romanists, to whom they forbade entrance into the colony; and though they tolerated the presence of the Jews, they would not for some time let them vote.

Social lines were very strongly marked,—the intensely aristocratic make-up of the town being in striking contrast to the democratic equality typical of a young American city of the same size nowadays. The manorial lords stood first in rank and influence, and in the respect universally

accorded them. They lived at ease in the roomy mansions on their great tenant-farmed estates; and they also usually owned fine houses in either New York or Albany, and sometimes in both. Their houses were really extremely comfortable, and were built with a certain stately simplicity of style which contrasted very favorably with the mean or pretentious architecture of most New York buildings dating back to the early or middle portions of the present century. They were filled with many rooms, wherein a host of kinsmen, friends, and retainers might dwell; and they had great halls, broad verandas, heavy mahogany-railed staircases, and huge open fireplaces, which in winter were crammed with roaring logs. The furniture was handsome, but stiff and heavy; the books were few; and there were masses of silver plate on the sideboards of the large dining-rooms. The gentry carried swords, and dressed in the artificial, picturesque fashion of the English upper classes; whereas the commonalty went about their work in smocks or leather aprons. Near Trinity Church was the "mall," or promenade for the fashionable set of the little colonial town. By an unwritten law none but the members of the ruling class used it; and on fine afternoons it was filled with a gayly dressed throng of young men and pretty girls, the latter attended by their negro waiting-maids. Prominent in the crowd, were the

scarlet coats of the officers from the English regiments, constantly quartered in New York because of the recurring French wars. The owners of these coats moved with an air of easy metropolitan superiority, a certain insolently patronizing condescension, which always awakened both the admiration and the jealous anger of the provincial aristocrats.[1] The leading colonial families stood on the same social plane with the English country gentlemen of wealth, and were often connected by marriage with the English nobility; but they could never forget—and were never permitted by their English friends to forget—that after all they were nothing but provincials, and that provincials could not stand quite on an equality with the old-world people.

The New York gentry, both of town and coun-

[1] European travelers naturally enough often failed to understand the aristocratic constitution of the New York social and governmental systems. The local aristocrats seemed to them uncouth and provincial; they were struck by the fact that they were often engaged in trade or other occupations which gentlemen were forbidden to enter by the European social code; and they saw that it was, of course, much easier than in the Old World for a man of energy to rise from the lowest to the highest round of the social ladder, no matter what his origin was. The aristocracy existed nevertheless. So to a London noble, Squire Western seemed only a boor, and he cordially hated all lords in return; yet Squire Western and his fellows formed at home a true oligarchy. And the constitution of the rude country society in which he lived was as emphatically aristocratic as was that of the capital of England.

try, were fond of horse-racing, and kept many well-bred horses. They drove out in chariots or huge clumsy coaches with their coats of arms blazoned on the panels,—the ship of the Livingstons, the lance of the De Lanceys, the burning castle of the Morrises, and the other armorial bearings of the families of note being known to all men throughout the province. On a journey the gentry either went by water in their own sloops or else in these coaches, with liveried postilions and outriders; and when one of the manorial lords came to town, his approach always caused much excitement, the negroes, children, and white work-people gathering to gaze at the lumbering, handsomely painted coach, drawn by four huge Flemish horses, the owner sitting inside with powdered wig and cocked hat, scarlet or somber velvet coat, and silver-hilted sword. In the town itself sedan chairs were in common use. There was a little theater where performances were given, now by a company of professional actors, and again by the officers of the garrison regiments; and to these performances as well as to the balls and other merrymakings the ladies sometimes went in chariots or sedan chairs, and sometimes on their own daintily shod feet. The people of note usually sent their negro servants, each dressed in the livery of his master, in advance to secure good seats. There was much dancing and frolicking, besides formal dinners and

picnics; sailing parties, and in winter skating parties and long sleigh rides were favorite amusements; all classes took part eagerly in the shooting matches. The dinners were rather heavy entertainments, with much solemn toast-drinking; and they often ended with boisterous conviviality,—for most of the men drank hard, and prided themselves on their wine cellars. Christmas and New Year's day were great festivals, the latter being observed in Dutch fashion,—the gentlemen calling at all the houses of their acquaintance, where they feasted and drank wine. Another Dutch festival of universal observance was Pinkster, held in the springtide. It grew to be especially the negroes' day, all of the blacks of the city and neighboring country gathering to celebrate it. There was a great fair, with merrymaking and games of all kinds on the Common, where the City Hall park now is; while the whites also assembled to look on, and sometimes to take part in the fun. Most of the house servants were negro slaves.

The people of means sometimes had their children educated at home, and sometimes sent them to the little colleges which have since become Columbia and Princeton,—colleges which were then inferior to a good English grammar school. Occasionally the very wealthy and ambitious sent their boys to Oxford or Cambridge, where the improved opportunities for learning were far more

than counterbalanced by the fact that the boy was likely to come back much less fitted than his home-staying brother to play a man's part in the actual work of American life. The true colonial habit of thought, the deference for whatever came from the home country, whether rank or title, fashion or learning, was nearly universal, although the bolder and more independent spirits were already beginning to assume an attitude of protest against it. In truth it was very easy to get opinions ready-made from the Old World, while it was hard work to fashion them out originally from the raw material ready at hand in the New. New Yorkers had as yet been given little opportunity for deep thought or weighty action. Provincial politics offered but a cramped and narrow field for vigorous intellects; and to the native New Yorker, war held no higher possibilities than the leadership in a dashing foray against the Canadians and Indians, or the captaincy in a successful cruise among French and Spanish merchantmen. There was no home literature worthy of the name, and little chance for its immediate development; and art was not much better off.

The New York merchants and smaller landed proprietors stood next to the great manorial families; they mixed with them socially, and often married among them, following their lead in matters political. The merchants lived in comfortable

brick or stone houses, and owned large warehouses and stores of every description. Many of them had great gardens round their homes; for New York was still but a little country town. Nevertheless, as the years went by, its growth, sluggish at first, became more and more rapid. Coffee-houses were started; there were good inns for the wealthy, and taverns for the poorer; and there were schools, a poorhouse, and a jail.

Next to the merchants came the middle class,—the small freeholders with whom the suffrage stopped short. They were the rank and file of the voters, and in political contests generally followed the banner of one or the other of the great families, from whom they were separated by a deep social gulf. Then came the class of free workmen; and below these,—though as years went by, merging into them,—the very distinct class of unfree whites, the imported bond-servants, redemptioners, apprentices, and convicts, who had been sent to the colonies. These were by no means all criminals and paupers, though very many such were included among them. Some were honest, poor men, who could not get a living at home, and had no money wherewith to go abroad; and these were regularly sold for a term of years to make good their passage money. They were of many nationalities,—English, Irish, and Germans predominating, though there were some Scotch, Welsh,

and Swiss. On the arrival of a ship containing them, they were usually duly advertised, the occupation—as tradesman, farmer, or laborer—for which they were best fitted being specified, and were then immediately sold at auction into what was simply slavery for a limited period; and as they were sometimes harshly treated they were very prone to run away. Judging by the advertisements in the colonial newspapers the runaway white bond-servants were almost as numerous as the runaway slaves. After their term of service was over, some of them became honest, hard-working citizens, while the others swelled the ranks of the idle, vicious, semi-criminal class, clustering in the outskirts and alleys of the town. As a whole, this species of immigrant was very harmful, and added a most undesirable element to the population. It may well be doubted if relatively to our total numbers, we have had any class of immigrants during the present century which as a class was so bad; and indeed it is safe to say that in proportion, eighteenth-century New York had quite as much vice and vicious poverty within its limits as the present huge city; and most of the vice and poverty among the whites was due to this importation of bond-servants and convicts.

The negro slaves formed a very large portion of the town's population,—at times nearly half,—for over a century after it was founded; then they

gradually began to dwindle in numbers compared to the whites, for although they were retained as household servants, it was found that they were not fitted for manual and agricultural labor, as in the southern colonies. During the first half of the eighteenth century they were still very numerous, and were for the most part of African birth, being fresh from the holds of the Guinea slavers; they were brutal, ignorant savages, and the whites were in constant dread of a servile insurrection. In 1712 this fear was justified, at least partially, for in that year the slaves formed a wild, foolish plot to destroy all the whites; and some forty of them attempted to put it into execution. Armed with every kind of weapon, they met at midnight in an orchard on the outskirts of the town, set fire to a shed, and assaulted those who came running up to quell the flames. In this way they killed nine men and wounded some others, before the alarm was given and the soldiers from the fort approaching, put them to flight. They fled to the forests in the northern part of the island; but the militia, roused to furious anger, put sentries at the fords, and then hunted down the renegade negroes like wild beasts. Six, in their despair, slew themselves; and twenty-one of those who were captured were shot, hung, or burned at the stake.

This attempted revolt greatly increased the uneasiness of the white inhabitants, and was largely

responsible for the ferocious panic of fear, rage, and suspicion into which they were thrown by the discovery of another plot among the negroes in 1741. During this panic the citizens went almost mad with cruel terror, and did deeds which make a dark stain on the pages of New York's history,—deeds which almost parallel those done in the evil days of the Salem witchcraft persecutions, save that in the New York case there really was some ground for the anger and resentment of the persecutors. Exactly how much ground there was, however, it is impossible to say. There is no doubt that many of the slaves, especially among those of African birth, were always vaguely hoping for, and perhaps planning for, the destruction of their masters, and that some of the bolder and more brutal spirits did actually indulge in furtive incendiarism, outrage, and attempted murder; but there is no reason to suppose that the great mass of the blacks were ever engaged in the plot, or that there was ever any real danger of a general outbreak. Slave-owners, however, live always under the hair-hung sword; they know that they can take no risks, and that their very existence depends on the merciless suppression of every symptom of hostile discontent.

During March, 1741, there broke out in New York so many fires in quick succession, that it seemed certain they were of incendiary origin; and

the conduct of a few of the slaves greatly excited the suspicions of the citizens. At the same time the indented servant-girl of a low tavern-keeper had been arrested, together with her master and mistress and two negroes, for complicity in a robbery. Proclamations offering rewards to whomever would give information concerning the supposed plot were read to her, and she suddenly professed herself aware of its existence. She asserted that her master and mistress and a number of the poor, semi-criminal whites, together with a multitude of blacks, were all engaged therein; and many of the ignorant slaves when arrested strove in their terror to save their own necks by corroborating and embellishing all the wild statements she made. The whole of New York went into a mad panic, and scores of people were imprisoned and put to death on the strength of these flimsy accusations. Fourteen negroes were burned at the stake, twenty hanged, and seventy-one transported; while of the twenty whites who were imprisoned, four were executed. Among the latter was a Catholic priest named Ury, who was condemned both for complicity in the negro plot to burn the town, and for having committed the heinous crime of administering the rites of his religion; and on the double count, although as far as appears without a shred of damaging evidence being produced against him, the unfortunate man

was actually hung, protesting his innocence to the last.[1] This added the touch of cruel religious bigotry which alone was wanting to complete the gloom of the picture. At last, glutted with victims, the panic subsided, leaving behind it the darkest page in our annals.

Besides this tragedy, the political struggles of colonial New York in the eighteenth century seem of small importance; yet there was one incident worthy of note, because it involved the freedom of the press. The first newspaper published in the city was a small weekly, started in 1725, under the name of the *New York Gazette*. It was the organ of the governor and aristocratic or court party. Nine years later a rival appeared in the shape of the *Weekly Journal* edited by a German immigrant named Zenger, and from the start avowedly the organ of the popular party. The royal governor at the time was a very foolish person named Cosby, appointed on the theory which then obtained, to the effect that a colonial governorship was to be used as a place for pensioning off any court favorite otherwise unprovided for, without reference to the result of his appointment upon the colony. He possessed a genius for petty oppression, which marked him for the especial hatred of the people. Zenger published a con-

[1] It is barely possible that Ury was a non-juring Episcopalian priest instead of a Catholic.

stant succession of lampoons, ballads, and attacks on all the Crown officials, the governing class, and finally even on Cosby himself. He was arrested and thrown into jail on the charge of libel; and the trial, which occupied most of the summer of 1735, attracted great attention. The chief-justice at the time was one of the Morrises, who belonged to the popular party; and as he was suspected of leaning to Zenger's side, he was turned out of office and replaced by one of the De Lanceys, the stoutest upholders of the Crown. De Lancey went to the length of disbarring Zenger's lawyers, so that he had to be defended by one imported from Philadelphia. But the people at large made Zenger's cause their own, and stood by him resolutely; while every ounce of possible pressure and influence from the Crown officials was brought to bear against him. The defense was that the statements asserted to be libellous were true. The attorney-general for the Crown took the ground that if true the libel was only so much the greater. The judges instructed the jury that this was the law; but the jury refused to be bound, and acquitted Zenger. The acquittal, which definitely secured the complete liberty of the press, was hailed with clamorous joy by the mass of the population; and it gave an immense impetus to the growth of the spirit of independence. From this time on, the two parties were

much more sharply defined than before. The court party, the faction of the Crown officials and of the bulk of the local aristocracy, included most of the Episcopalians and many of the Hollanders and Huguenots, while the rest of the population, including the Presbyterians, formed the popular party. The former often styled themselves Tories, and the latter Whigs, in imitation of the two English parties. Each faction was under the leadership of a number of the great landed families; for even in the ranks of the popular party the voters still paid reverence to the rich and powerful manorial lords. These great families were all connected by marriage, and were all split up by bitter feuds and political jealousies. The De Lanceys held the headship of the court, and the Livingstons of the popular party; and the contest took on so strongly personal a color that these two families almost gave their names to the factions with which they were respectively identified as leaders.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNREST BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. 1764-1774.

NO sooner was the long succession of French wars closed by the conquest of Canada, than American history entered on a new stage. Hitherto the contests had been waged between European powers for the possession of the various colonies, both the interests and the efforts of these colonies being of secondary importance. From this time on, however, the American settlements became themselves the chief factors in solving the problems of their own future, and the questions of policy hinged on the issues between them and the mother country.

The colonial system, which at this time was common to all seafaring European nations, was essentially vicious, and could not possibly last when the colonies grew in strength. England did not treat her colonies exceptionally ill; on the contrary, she behaved much better toward them than the other European nations of that day did to theirs. If she had not done so, the revolt against her power would have come far sooner; for no other nation had planted beyond the seas such a race of freemen as was growing up on the North Atlantic coast of America. They came

from a people long accustomed to a considerable measure of liberty, and all their surroundings in their new home tended to foster an independent and self-reliant spirit. They would not have tolerated a despotism like that of France or Spain for a day; and it was inevitable that they would eventually try to throw off even England's milder yoke, unless she adopted a course of colonial policy which was at that time understood by none but the most far-seeing or lofty-minded. Nor, indeed, is it certain that the colonists themselves, split up as they were by their province lines into jarring fragments, would have been capable of appreciating and profiting by such a course of colonial policy, even had the mother country adopted it.

The European theory of a colony was that it was planted by the home government for the benefit of the home government and home people, not for the benefit of the colonists themselves. Hardly any one grasped the grandeur of the movement by which the English-speaking race was to spread over the world's waste spaces, until a fourth of the habitable globe was in its hands,and until it became the mightiest race on which the sun has ever shone. Those in power did not think of the spread of a mighty people, and of its growth by leaps and bounds, but of the planting of new trading-posts; they did not realize the elementary fact that if the men who stretch abroad the race limits by settle-

ment and conquest are to be kept one with those who stay at home, they must be granted an equal share with the latter in administering the common government. The colony was held to be the property of the mother country,—property to be protected and well treated as a whole, but property nevertheless. Naturally the colonist himself was likewise held to occupy a similar position compared to the citizen of the home country. The Englishman felt himself to be the ruler and superior of the American; and even though he tried to rule wisely, and meant to act well toward the colonists, the fact remained that he considered them his inferiors, and that his scheme of government distinctly recognized them as such. The mere existence of such a feeling, and its embodiment in the governmental system, warranted a high-spirited people in revolting against it.

Of course the colonists on their part did much that was blamable also. They would rarely make any sustained effort to help themselves if they could persuade England to make it for them. They knew she warred for their interest because it was her interest to do so; and they were glad to throw on her shoulders as much as possible of the burden of their defense. The colonial armies performed some notable feats of warfare; and for a short campaign the colonies were always willing to furnish thousands of stout and vigorous though

ill-disciplined soldiers. But they hated to pay their bills; they would never make provision for any sustained effort, nor carry through any far-reaching policy; they were impatient of restraint; and they wrangled perpetually among themselves. As a result, their parsimony, greed, and selfishness, and their jealousy of one another, caused them at times—in spite of some heroic actions—to cut but sorry figures in the struggles with France. They swindled and overcharged the very troops sent out to protect them; and their legislatures could with difficulty be persuaded to vote sufficient money to prosecute the wars with proper vigor. New York was vitally interested in seeing Canada cowed and the French intrigues among the Indians definitely stopped; yet the New York Assembly insisted that the whole expense of the conquest of Canada ought to come on the mother country. New England looked on unmoved when the French merely raided on New York; and New York sold arms to the savages who attacked New England. All the provinces were dependent on the British fleets for the defense of their open seaboard and widely scattered trade; but doubtless feeling that both trade and seaboard were menaced by foes that were primarily foes to Britain, not to America, they evinced no inclination to do their share in paying for the navy to which they trusted. On the other hand, it must be said that

the citizens were much readier with their lives than their purses; and though they did not share the expense of England's fleets, they furnished in the last colonial war nearly twenty thousand of the seamen who manned them.

However, admitting all that can be urged against them does not alter the fact—by none more freely conceded than by English historians nowadays—that on the main question the mutinous provinces were in the right. They were in many ways well treated, but they were never treated as equals, and they were sometimes treated badly. They needed and wished, not mingled favors and injuries, but justice. There were many public men in England who strove to do right by the colonies; but there were very many others who looked on their dependencies purely from the standpoint of British interest. When in the warfare of factions and parties the latter wielded the power of government, they were certain to produce such intense irritation in the minds of Americans that even the non-fulfilment of their plans or the return of the friends of America to power, could not allay the ill feeling. There were numerous English statesmen of high rank and great influence who avowedly wished to check and hamper the growth of the colonies; who desired to stop the westward march of the settlers, and to keep the continent beyond the Alleghanies as a

hunting-ground whereon savages might gather furs for British traders; who forbade the building up of American manufactures, and strove to keep the seaboard towns as trading-posts for the sole benefit of British merchants. The existence of such statesmen, and the ever-recurring probability of their taking the control of affairs, rendered it impossible for Americans to retain their loyalty to the home government. It is hard at the present time to realize how totally the theories of colonization and of colonial possessions have changed; and it was our own Revolution, and the struggles which followed in its train that changed them. It is owing to the success of the United States that Australia and Canada of to-day are practically independent countries as regards their internal concerns and their external relations with other nations in time of peace. The fiercest reactionary in Britain would not now dream of asking Australians and Canadians to submit to regulations to which even the most truculent American patriot never thought of objecting before the Revolution.

For the colonists were so used to the yoke that though they grew restless under it, they only dumbly knew it galled them, and could not tell exactly where. They submitted quietly to some forms of oppression which really amounted to heavy indirect taxation in the interest of British merchants and manufacturers, and then revolted

at a very small direct impost, on the ground that there should be no taxation without representation; and all the while they were objecting almost as strenuously to paying their share of certain perfectly proper expenditures undertaken in their interest by the home country. The truth was that they were revolting against the whole system, which they dimly felt to be wrong before they were able to formulate their reasons for so feeling; the particular acts of oppression of which they complained were the occasions rather than the causes of the outbreak. The reasons for discontent had existed for many years, and their growth kept steady pace with the growth of the colonies. The French and Spanish wars had kept them in the background, all other matters being swallowed up by the stress of the struggle with the common enemy; but as soon as Canada was conquered, and the outside pressure taken off, the questions between the mother country and the colonies became of the first importance, and speedily showed signs of producing an open rupture.

In truth, the rupture was as beneficial as it was necessary,—always assuming that the alternative was the continuance of the old colonial system. Had England's King and Parliament been guided by the most far-seeing statesman, and had causes of irritation been avoided, and a constantly increasing measure of liberty and participation in

the government allowed the colonists, it may have been that the empire would have been kept together. The revolt of America was not one of those historic events which are inevitable and foreordained, and in no way to be averted; wise statesmanship, and a temper in the British people willing to correspond, might have prevented it. But as the conditions actually were, it was a benefit. The acceptance, by both sides, of the theory of the supremacy of the mother country was quite enough to dwarf the intellectual and moral growth of the colonies. The "colonial" habit of thought is a very unfortunate one. The deferential mental attitude toward all things connected with the old country, whether good or bad, merely because they *are* connected with the old country, is incompatible with free and healthy development. No colonist will ever do good original work so long as he thinks of the old country as "home." The mere fact that he so thinks, prevents his reaching the first rank as an American or Canadian or Australian, as the case may be, and yet entirely fails to make him even a second-rate Englishman. If the men who stay at home and the men who settle new lands can continue members of the same nation, on a footing of perfect equality, this is the best possible outcome of the situation; and the highest task of statesmen is to work out some such solution. But if one party must remain inferior

to the other, it is in the end better that they should separate, great though the evils of separation be. It is of incalculable advantage to Oregon and Texas, no less than to New York and Virginia, to be members of the mighty Federal Union; but this is because the citizens of all four States stand on precisely the same footing. If Texas and Oregon were not given the full rights of the original thirteen commonwealths, freely and without the least reserve, it would be better for them to stand alone. But in reality we have become so accustomed to the new system that we do not conceive of the possibility of any failure to grant such rights. The feeling of equality among the different commonwealths is genuine and universal. The difference in their ages never occurs to any one as furnishing a ground for a feeling of superiority or the reverse; it does not enter at all into the jealousies between the different States or sections. The fact that the new communities are offshoots of the old is never taken into account in any way whatever. This feeling now seems to us part of the order of Nature; and its very universality is apt to blind us to the immense importance of the struggle by which it was firmly established as a principle. Until the Revolution, it may almost be said to have had no recognized existence at all.

In every colony outside of New England and Virginia there was a large Tory party; and

nowhere was it relatively larger than in New York. The peculiarly aristocratic structure of New York society had a very great effect upon the revolutionary movement, which took on a twofold character, being a struggle for America against England on the one hand, and an uprising of the democracy against the local oligarchy on the other. The lowest classes of the population cared but little for the principles of either party; and sided with one or the other accordingly as their temporary interests or local feuds and jealousies influenced them. They furnished to both Whigs and Tories the scoundrels who hung in the wake of the organized armies, hot for plunder and murder,—the marauders who carried on a ferocious predatory warfare between the lines or on the Indian frontier, and who took advantage of the general disorder to wreak their private spites and rob and outrage the timid, well-to-do people of both sides, with impartial brutality. A large number of the citizens, possibly nearly half, were but lukewarm adherents of either cause. Among them were many of the men of means, who were anxious to side with the winners, and feared much to lose their possessions, and a still greater number of men who were too indifferent and cold-hearted, too deficient in patriotism and political morality to care how the affair was decided. Among them were many men also who were of ultra-conservative

mind, not yet far enough advanced in that difficult school which teaches how to combine a high standard of personal liberty with a high standard of public order. The bulk of the intelligent working-classes, the most truly American members of the colonial body politic, formed also the bulk of the popular party. Here also all the Presbyterians and the majority of the members of the Dutch Reformed and Huguenot congregations naturally found their proper place. Very many of the gentry also belonged to it; and it was led by some of the great families,—the Livingstons, Schuylers, and others,—including all those whose pride of caste was offset by their belief in freedom, or was overcome by their profound Americanism, when caste and country came into conflict. Most of the Episcopalian clergy and the majority of their flocks, as well as a minority of the Dutch Reformed congregations, belonged to the court party, as did the greater portion of the local aristocracy, led by the De Lanceys, De Peysters, and Philippses, and by the Johnsons, who ruled the Mohawk Valley in half-savage, half-feudal state.

Of course the lines between these various classes were not drawn sharply at the outset. In the beginning very few, even of the most violent extremists among the Whigs dared to hint at independence; while scarcely any of the most bigoted

Tories upheld the Crown and the Parliament in all their doings. The power lay in the hands of the moderate men, who did not wish for extreme measures, until the repeated blunders and aggressions of the king and his advisers exasperated the people at large beyond the possibility of restraint. The ablest and purest leaders of the New York patriots during the Revolution—men like Schuyler, Jay, Morris, and Hamilton—disliked mob-violence as much as they hated tyranny, and felt no sympathy with the extremists of their own party. An English statesman like Chatham, or an English statesman like Walpole, might have held these men, and therefore the American colonies, to their allegiance. But the necessary breadth and liberality were lacking, possibly in the temper of the age itself, certainly in the temper of King George and his ministers. They persevered in their course, offering concessions only when the time they would have been accepted was past. Then the break came, and the moderate men had to choose the side with which they wished to range themselves; and after some misgivings most of them—and the best of them—put love of their country above loyalty to their king, and threw in their lot with the revolutionary party. However, not a few of the leading families divided, sending sons into both camps.

When in 1765 the Stamp Act was passed by the

British Parliament, the popular party held the control of the New York legislature. Accordingly among all the colonial legislatures New York's stood foremost in stout assertion of the right of the colonies to the full enjoyment of liberty, and in protest against taxation without representation. The New York newspapers were especially fervid in denouncing the law, while the legislature appointed a committee to correspond concerning the subject with the legislative bodies of the other colonies. Finally the Stamp Act Congress met in New York, nine of the thirteen colonies being represented, and voted a Declaration of Rights and an Address to the King. But the people themselves, acting through the suddenly raised, and often secret or semi-secret, organizations, took more effective measures of protest than either congress or legislature. The most influential of these societies was that styled the "Sons of Liberty"; all of them were raised in the first place with an excellent purpose, and numbered in their ranks many stanch and wise patriots, but like all such organizations they tended to pass under the control of men whose violence better fitted them to raise mobs than to carry through a great revolution.

The arrival in New York of the first ship bearing a cargo of the hated stamps produced intense excitement. The merchants met in a tavern and

signed a non-importation agreement, in order to retaliate on the British merchants and manufacturers. The mob inclined to rougher measures; colonial New York was always a turbulent little town, thanks especially to the large number of seafaring folk among its inhabitants. The sailors had an especial antipathy to the soldiers of the garrison, and rows between them were frequent; with more reason, they hated the press-gangs of the British frigates, and often interfered to save their victims, with the result of producing actual riots, wherein bludgeons and cutlasses were freely used. This known turbulence of the townsfolk alarmed both the acting governor, Colden,—a loyal, obstinate, narrow-minded man—and the commander of the troops in garrison, General Gage. As the time for putting the Stamp Act in force drew near, the governor took refuge in the fort on the south end of Manhattan Island, which was ostentatiously put in good condition, while the troops were made ready for instant action. It was hoped that these open preparations would awe the city; but they produced only irritation.

The act was to go into effect on November 1, and the ship carrying the stamps hove in sight on October 23. A couple of war vessels escorted it to a safe anchorage under the guns of the fort, while the flags on the shipping in the harbor were half-masted as a sign of grief and defiance, and a huge

crowd of New Yorkers gathered on the wharves with every sign of rebellious anger. In the night, placards signed "Vox Populi" and "We dare" were posted all over town, threatening the persons and property of whoever dared use the stamps; and the feeling was so violent and universal that not even the boldest attempted to meddle with the forbidden paper. November 1 was ushered in by the tolling of muffled bells; in the evening a crowd gathered, under the lead of a band of the Sons of Liberty. The radical men were in control; and after some inflammatory speech-making the governor was hung in effigy on the common. Not satisfied with this, the crowd marched down to the fort, headed by a sailor carrying another effigy of the governor in a chair on his head; and this they proceeded to burn on the Bowling Green, under the guns of the fort, hammering at the gates of the latter and yelling defiance at the garrison. By this time they had gotten past all control, and not only broke into the governor's stable and burned his chariot, but also sacked the house of the major of one of the garrison regiments, a man whom they regarded as particularly obnoxious. Other houses were also attacked.

The moderate men, including all the leaders who afterward, when the real strain came, showed genuine ability, utterly disapproved of this mob-violence and lawlessness; and by their energetic

conduct they succeeded in staving off for the moment further action by the mob, which was much emboldened by the lack of resistance. Soon, however, the populace became once more worked up to the pitch of violence by the taunts and harangues of the radical leaders,—hot-headed men of small capacity and much energy, part patriot and part demagogue. They threatened to assault the fort; and the mayor and aldermen, to prevent civil war, earnestly besought the governor to give them the stamps for safe keeping. The humiliation of such a course was at first too much for the governor; but neither he nor the commander-in-chief, General Gage, possessed the iron temper fitted to grapple with such an emergency. After some delay they yielded, and surrendered the stamps to the municipal authorities, while the people at large celebrated their victory with wild enthusiasm, and felt a natural contempt for the government they had overcome. The tyranny which imposes an unjust law, and then abandons the effort to enforce it for fear of mob-violence is thoroughly despicable. The least respectable form of oppression is that which is constantly miscalculating its own powers, and is never quite able to make up its own mind.

However, the repeal of the Stamp Act produced such universal satisfaction in America that all outward signs of disloyalty to the Crown

disappeared completely. New York received a new governor who behaved with such wisdom and moderation, and showed such a conciliatory disposition, that the royalist or court party revived in full strength. In the struggle over the legislative elections of 1768, they won a complete victory, led by the De Lanceys,—the Livingston or popular party being in a decided minority in the Assembly. It was this legislature, elected in the moment of reaction, that was in session when the Revolution broke out; and it lagged so far behind the temper of the people that it was finally set aside, and the initial work of the Revolutionary government committed to various improvised bodies.

In their joy over the repeal of the Stamp Act the citizens erected a monument to King George,—which the American soldiers pulled down in the early days of the Revolution, receiving in consequence a severe rebuke from Washington, who heartily despised such exhibitions of childish spite.

Even during these years of comparative loyalty, however, there was plenty of unrest and disturbance. There was perpetual wrangling over the Billeting Act, by which Parliament strove to force the colonists to pay for the troops quartered in their midst; an act concerning which there was something to be said on both sides. If England was to assume the burden of the common defense,

she had to quarter her troops in the colonial towns, and it seemed fair that the colonists should pay for their quarters. On the other hand, if the colonists were not consulted in the matter, and if they were forced to pay for troops sent among them in time of peace, when no foreign enemy was to be feared, it looked much as if they were being made to support the very force that was to keep them in subjection. On the whole, the colonists were right in objecting to the presence of the troops in time of peace except on their own terms; although they thereby estopped themselves from insisting that the mother country should do more than its share in protecting them in time of war. If, of two parties, one raises the army for common defense, the other cannot expect to have much to say about its disposal.

The British troops in garrison naturally disliked the townsfolk, on whom in turn their mere presence acted as an irritant. The soldiers when out of barracks and away from the control of their officers were always coming into collision with the mob, in which the seafaring element was strong; and the resulting riots not infrequently involved also the respectable mechanics and small traders, and even the merchants and gentry. The great source of quarrel was the liberty pole. This had been erected on the anniversary of the king's birth, June 6, 1766, to celebrate the repeal of the Stamp

Act; there was a great barbecue on the occasion,—an ox being roasted whole on the common,—while hogsheads of punch and ale were broached, bonfires were lit, and amid the booming of cannon and pealing of bells a flag was hoisted with the inscription, "The King, Pitt, and Liberty,"—the colonists being enthusiastically devoted to their two great parliamentary champions, Pitt and Burke.

The liberty pole was an eyesore to the soldiers in the fort, and its destruction or attempted destruction became one of their standing pastimes. Several times they succeeded, usually when they sallied out at night; and then the liberty pole was chopped down or burnt up. The townsfolk, headed by the Sons of Liberty, always gathered to the rescue. If too late to save the pole, they put up another one, and stood guard over it; if in time to attempt a rescue, a bloody riot followed. In the latter part of January, 1770, parties of soldiers and townsfolk fought a series of pitched battles in the streets, the riot lasting for two days. It began by a successful surprise on the part of the soldiers, who cut down the pole early one morning. The townsfolk held an indignation meeting and denounced vengeance on the soldiers, who retaliated by posting derisive placards on the walls of the fort and public buildings. A series of skirmishes ensued in which heads were broken, and

men cut and stabbed,—the soldiers being usually overcome by numbers, all of the working-men and every sailor in town swarming out to assail the redcoats. Some of the hardest fighting occurred when a troop of soldiers attacked a number of sailors, who were rescued by some of the Liberty Boys who had been playing ball on the Common. Several persons were badly injured, and in one scuffle a sailor was thrust through with a bayonet, and slain; after which his comrades, armed with bludgeons, drubbed the soldiers into their barracks. The upshot was that the townsfolk were victorious, and the liberty pole was not again molested.

This was the first bloodshed in the struggle which culminated in the Revolution. It occurred six weeks before the so-called "Boston Massacre," —an incident of the same kind, in which, however, the Americans were much less clearly in the right than they were in the New York case. Even in New York the soldiers had doubtless been sorely provoked by the taunts and jeers of the townsmen; but there was absolutely no justification for their cutting down the liberty pole, and the New Yorkers were perfectly right in refusing to submit tamely to such an outrage.

The chief fault seems to have lain with the garrison officers, who should have kept their men under restraint, or else have taken immediate

steps to remedy the wrong they did in cutting down the pole.

This rioting however produced no more than local irritation. After the repeal of the Stamp Act, the colonies were not again stirred by a common emotion until the passage by Parliament of the Tea Act, avowedly passed, and avowedly resisted simply to test the principle of taxation. Its enactment was the signal for the Sons of Liberty and other societies—such as that of the Mohawks —to reorganize at once. In Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, the sentiment was unanimous that the tea shipped from England should be thrown overboard or shipped back; and Boston was the first to put the threat into execution. New York followed suit in April, 1774, when the first tea ships reached the harbor, only to be boarded by an excited multitude who heaved the tea-chests of one vessel into the harbor, and forced the other to stand out to sea without landing her cargo.

The measures of retaliation against Boston taken by the British government, aroused in New York the liveliest sympathy for the New Englanders. The radical party, acting without any authority through a self-constituted Committee of Vigilance, began to correspond with the Boston extremists; and this gave alarm to the moderate men, who at once aroused themselves and took the

matter into their own hands, so as not to be compromised by unwise and hasty action. Accordingly, to the chagrin of the extremists, they promptly disowned and repudiated the action of the vigilance committee. At the same time they thoroughly distrusted the zeal of their aristocratic legislature. They therefore convoked a meeting of the freeholders, who with due solemnity elected a Committee of Fifty-one to correspond with the other colonies. This committee was entirely in the hands of the moderate men, even containing in its ranks several Tories and very few of the radicals, and did a piece of work of which it is difficult to overestimate the importance; for it was the first authoritatively to suggest the idea of holding the first Continental Congress. This suggestion is said to have been adopted by the advice of John Jay, a young lawyer of good Huguenot family. Under the auspices of the committee the freeholders chose five delegates to this congress,—including John Jay, and as a matter of course, one of the Livingstons also. The radicals and extremists, the Sons of Liberty and the old Committee of Vigilance, with the Committee of Mechanics—the body supposed to represent most nearly the unenfranchised classes—were greatly discontented with the moderate measures of the Committee of Fifty-one; and there was very nearly a rupture between the two wings of the patriot party. By mutual

concessions this was averted; and the delegates were elected without opposition. They took their full part in the acts of the first Continental Congress during its short session, the colony being thereby committed to the common cause. At the same time, when the Committee of Fifty-one went out of existence its place was taken by another, differing in little more than the fact of having sixty members.

CHAPTER X.

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR. 1775-1783.

THE year 1775 was for New York City one of great doubt and anxiety. All classes had united in sending delegates to the first Continental Congress. The most ardent supporters of the Crown and Parliament were opposed to the Stamp Act and Tea Act, and were anxious to protest against them, and to try to bring about a more satisfactory understanding between the mother country and her colonies. On the other hand the popular party as yet shrank from independence. The men who thus early thought of separation from Britain were in a small and powerless minority; indeed, they were but a little knot of republican enthusiasts, who for several years had been accustomed at their drinking-bouts to toast the memory of the famous English regicides.

With the summoning of the second Continental Congress this unity disappeared, as the Whigs and Tories began to drift in opposite ways,—the one party toward violent measures with separation in the background, the other toward reconciliation even at the cost of submission. A Tory mob tried to break up the meeting at which delegates to the second Congress were chosen, and were only

driven off after a number of heads had been broken.

New York still remained doubtful. In fact, all of the colonies outside of Virginia and New England—although containing strong patriot parties, animated by the most fiery zeal—were as a whole somewhat lukewarm in the Revolution, for they contained also large Tory, and still larger neutral elements in their midst. If left to themselves it is even doubtful if at this precise time they would have revolted; they were pushed into independence by the Virginians and New Englanders. Not only was the Tory element in New York very large, but there was also a powerful body of Whigs —typified by Schuyler and Gouverneur Morris— who furnished very able soldiers and statesmen when the actual fighting broke out, but who were thoroughly disgusted by the antics of the city mob; and though the major portion of this mob was rabidly anti-British as far as noise went, it was far more anxious to maltreat unhappy individual Tories than to provoke a life and death struggle with the troops and war-ships of the British king. Nor must it be forgotten that there were plenty of Tories in the mob itself, and these among the most abandoned and violent of the city's population.

The provincial legislature was as a body actively loyal to the king. But, in spite of the presence of

the large Tory and neutral elements, the revolutionary party was unquestionably in the lead among the people, and contained the most daring spirits and the loftiest minds of the colony. There is much to admire in the resolute devotion which many tens of thousands of Loyalists showed to the king, whose cause they made their own; and there is much to condemn in the excesses committed by a portion of the popular party. Nevertheless, as in the great English civil war of the preceding century, the party of liberty was the party of right. The purest and ablest New Yorkers were to be found in the ranks of the revolutionists; for keen-eyed and right-thinking men saw that on the main issue justice was with the colonists. The young men of ardent, generous temper, such as Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and Gouverneur Morris, found it impossible to side with the foreign party. They were Americans, freemen, conscious that they deserved to stand on a level with the best of any land; and they could not cast in their lot with the party which held as a cardinal point of its creed the doctrine of their inferiority.

The mass of quiet, good, respectable people, of conservative instincts and rather dull feelings, might rest content with being treated as inferiors, if on the whole they were treated well; might submit to being always patronized and often bullied, if only they were protected; might feel

they owed an honest debt of gratitude to their champions in former wars; and might shrink from enduring the hundred actual evils of civil conflict merely for the sake of protesting against the violation of certain abstract rights and principles; but the high-spirited young men, the leaders in thought and action, fixed with unerring certainty upon the central and vital truth of the situation. They saw that the struggle, when resolved into its ultimate elements, was to allow Americans the chance for full and free development, uncramped by the galling sense of admitted inferiority. The material benefits conferred by the continuance of British rule might or might not offset the material disadvantages it involved; but they could not weigh against the evils of a system which dwarfed the character and intellect,—a system which condemned all colonists to remain forever in the second rank, which forbade their striving for the world's great prizes, unless they renounced their American birthright, and which deprived them of those hopes that especially render life worth living in the eyes of the daring and ambitious. To their free, bold spirits, the mere assumption of their inferiority was an intolerable grievance, as indeed it has ever been esteemed by the master races of the world. Sooner than submit, in ignoble peace and safety, to an order of things which would have stunted

the moral and mental growth of the country, they were willing to risk not only the dangers of war with the British king, but the far worse dangers of disorder, violence, anarchy, and a general loosening of the social bonds among Americans themselves. The event proved their wisdom.

Yet the dangers were very real and great. The country was still in the gristle; the thews had not hardened. There had been much lawlessness, in one quarter and another, already; and the long struggle of the Revolution produced hideous disorganization. It is impossible to paint in too dark colors the ferocity of the struggle between the Whigs and Tories; and the patriot mobs, either of their own accord or instigated by the Sons of Liberty and kindred bodies, often took part in proceedings which were thoroughly disgraceful. New York had her full share of these mob-outbreaks during the summer of 1775. The lawyers, pamphleteers, and newspaper writers, who contributed so largely to arouse the people, also too often joined to hound the populace on to the committal of outrages. The mob broke into and plundered the houses of wealthy Loyalists, rode Tories on rails, or tarred, feathered, and otherwise brutally maltreated them, and utterly refused to allow to others the liberty of speech and thought they so vociferously demanded for themselves. They hated and threatened the Episcopalian, or

Church of England, clergy, because of that part of the liturgy in which the king was prayed for; and finally the Episcopalian churches had to be closed for fear of them. They drove off the Tory president of King's (now Columbia) College and joined with a Connecticut mob to wreck the office of the Loyalist newspaper. It is to their credit, however, that there was little interference with the courts of justice. They did not come into collision with the soldiers of the garrison, and the latter were permitted to embark for Massachusetts Bay, where hostilities had fairly begun; but they refused to allow any stores or munitions of war to be shipped to the beleaguered garrison at Boston. There were frequent rows with the boats' crews of the frigates in the bay; once with the result of a broadside being fired into the town by an affronted man-of-war.

In spite of these disturbances, New York still remained reluctant to burn her boats, and throw in her lot once for all with the patriots. Both Washington, on his way to take command of the American army at Boston, and Tryon, the royal governor, were received with the same formal tokens of respect. Meanwhile business was at a standstill, and a third of the inhabitants had left the town.

By the beginning of the year 1776 the real leaders of the city and province the men of mark, and

of proved courage and capacity, saw that all hope of compromise was over. They had been disgusted with the turbulence of the mob, and the noisy bragging and threatening of its leaders,—for the most part frothy men, like Isaac Sears, who sank out of ken when the days of rioting passed, and the grim, weary, bloody years of fighting were ushered in; but they were infinitely more disgusted with the spirit of tyrannous folly shown by the King and Parliament. The only possible outcome was independence.

The citizens had become thoroughly hostile to the Tory Colonial Assembly, and had formally set it aside and replaced it, first by a succession of committees, and then by a series of provincial congresses, corresponding to the central Continental Congress. The mob never controlled these congresses, whose leaders were men like Schuyler, Van Zandt, Van Cortlandt, Jay, the Livingstons, the Morrises, the Van Rensselaers, the Ludlows,—representatives of the foremost families of the New York gentry.[1] When the Provincial Con-

[1] The names of the members of these committees and provincial congresses are English, Dutch, Huguenot, Scotch, Irish, and German; the English in the lead, with the Dutch coming next. Many of the families were represented by more than one individual: thus of the Livingstons there were Walter, Peter Van Brugh, Robert L., and Philip; of the Ludlows, Gabriel and William; of the Beekmans, David and William; of the Roosevelts, Isaac and Nicholas; etc.

gress, with unanimity and the heartiest enthusiasm, ratified the Declaration of Independence, it was evident that the best men in New York were on the Revolutionary side.

In January, 1776, Washington sent one of his generals to take command in New York, and in April he himself made it his headquarters, having at last driven the enemy from Boston. Soon the motly levies of the patriot army were thronging the streets,—some in homespun or buckskin, a few in the dingy scarlet they had worn in the last French war, Marylanders in green hunting-shirts, Virginians in white smocks, militia in divers uniforms from the other colonies, and Washington's guards, the nucleus of the famous Continental troops of the line, in their blue and buff. All New York was in a ferment; and the ardent young patriots were busy from morning till night in arming, equipping, and drilling the regiments that made up her quota.[1]

The city was in no state to resist a siege, or an attack by a superior force. Her forts, such as they were, would not have availed against any foe more formidable than a light frigate or heavy privateer. The truth was that the United States—for such

[1] The younger men among the leading city families furnished most of the captains for the city regiments,—among them being Henry S. Livingston, Abraham Van Wyck, John Berrian, John J. Roosevelt, and others. Many of the most distinguished, however, had themselves risen from the ranks.

the revolted colonies had become—were extremely vulnerable to assault. Their settled territory lay in a narrow belt, stretching for a thousand miles along the coast. Its breadth was but a hundred miles or so, in most places; then it faded off, the inland frontier lying vaguely in the vast, melancholy, Indian-haunted forests. The ferocious and unending warfare with the red woodland tribes kept the thinly scattered pioneers busy defending their own hearthstones, and gave them but scant breathing spells in which to come to the help of their brethren in the old settled regions. The eastern frontier was the coast-line itself, which was indented by countless sounds, bays, and harbors, and here and there broken by great estuaries or tide-water rivers, which could carry hostile fleets into the heart of the land. The bulk of the population, and all the chief towns, lay in easy striking distance from the sea. Almost all the intercolonial trade went along the water-ways, either up and down the rivers, or skirting the coast. There was no important fortress or fortified city; no stronghold of note. A war power having command of the seas possessed the most enormous advantage. It menaced the home trade almost as much as the foreign, threatened the whole exposed coast-line,—and therefore the settled country which lay alongside it,—could concentrate its forces wherever it wished, and could penetrate the

country at will. The revolted colonists had no navy, while the mother country possessed the most powerful in the world. She was fourfold their superior in population, and a hundredfold in wealth; she had a powerful standing army, while they had none. Moreover, the colonists' worst foes were those of their own household. The active Tories and half-hearted neutrals formed the majority of the population in many districts,—including Long Island and Staten Island. The Americans were then a race of yeomen, or small farmers, who were both warlike in temper and unmilitary in habits. They were shrewd, brave, patriotic, stout of heart and body, and proudly self-reliant, but impatient of discipline, and most unwilling to learn the necessity of obedience. Their notion of war was to enlist for a short campaign, usually after the hay was in, and to return home by winter, or sooner, if their commanding officers displeased them. They seemed unable to appreciate the need of sustained effort. The jealousies of the different States and their poverty and short-sighted parsimony, the looseness of the Federal tie, the consequent impotence of the central government, and the radical unfitness of the Continental Congress as a body to conduct war, all combined to render the prospects of the patriots gloomy. Only the heroic grandeur of Washington could have built up victory from these jarring

elements. It was therefore natural for the patriot party of New York to look before it leaped; but the leap once taken, it never faltered. No other State north of South Carolina was so harried by the forces of the king; and against no other State did they direct such efforts or send such armies,—armies which held portions of it to the close of the war. Yet the patriot party remained firm throughout, never flinching through the long years, cheering the faint-hearted, crushing out the Tories, and facing the enemy with unshaken front.

Early in the summer a great armament began to gather in the lower bay; a force more numerous and more formidable than the famous Armada which nearly two centuries before had sailed from Spain against England. Scores of war-ships of every kind, from the heavy liner, with her tiers of massive cannon, to the cutter armed with a couple of light cannon, and hundreds of transports and provision-ships began to arrive, squadron by squadron. Aboard them was an army of nearly forty thousand fighting-men. A considerable number were Hessians, and other German troops, hired out by the greedy and murderous baseness of the princelets of Germany. The Americans grew to feel a peculiar hatred for these Hessians, because of the ravages they committed, and because of the merely mercenary nature of their services; but the wrong lay not with the poor, dull-witted,

hard-fighting boors, but with their sordid and contemptible masters.

With the near approach of this great army the Tories began plotting; and most rigorous measures were taken to stamp out these plots. For some reason the lower class of liquor sellers were mostly Tories, and many of the plots were found to have their origin among them or their customers. The Loyalist gentry had for the most part fled to the British lines. Those who remained behind—including both the mayor and ex-mayor of the city—were forced to take a stringent oath of allegiance to the Continental Congress and the new nation. The Tory plots were not mythical; one was unearthed which aimed at nothing less than the abducting or killing of Washington,—the ringleader, Thomas Hickey, an Irish soldier who had deserted from the royal army, being hanged for his villainy.

Washington saw the hopelessness of trying to defend New York with the materials he had, against such a force as was coming against it; and it was proposed to burn the town and retire so that the king's troops might gain nothing by the capture. This was undoubtedly the proper course to follow, from a purely military standpoint; but the political objections to its adoption were insuperable. Washington labored unceasingly at the almost hopeless task of perfecting the

discipline of his raw, ill-armed, ill-provided, jealousy-riven army; and he put down outrages, where he could, with a heavy hand. Nevertheless, many of the soldiers plundered right and left, treating the property of all Loyalists as rightfully to be confiscated, and often showing small scruple in robbing wealthy Whigs under pretense of mistaking them for Tories.

At last, in mid-August, the British general, Lord Howe, made up his mind to strike at the doomed city. He landed on Long Island a body of fifteen or twenty thousand soldiers,—English, Irish, and German.[1] The American forces on the island were not over half as numerous, and were stationed in the neighborhood of Brooklyn. Some of the British frigates had already ascended the Hudson to the Tappan Sea, and had cannonaded the town as they dropped down stream again, producing a great panic, but doing little damage. The royal army was landed on the twenty-second; but Lord Howe, a very slow, easy-going man, did not deliver his blow until five days later. The attack

[1] It is a curious fact that in the Revolutionary War the Germans and Catholic Irish should have furnished the bulk of the auxiliaries to the regular English soldiers; for as the English is the leading strain in our blood, so the German and the Irish elements come next. The Maryland Catholics, and most of the German settlers, were stout adherents of the Revolutionary cause. The fiercest and most ardent Americans of all, however, were the Presbyterian Irish settlers and their descendants.

was made in three divisions, early in the morning, and was completely successful. The Americans permitted themselves to be surprised, and were outgeneraled in every way. Not half the force on either side was engaged. Some of the American troops made but a short stand; others showed a desperate but disorderly valor. About two thousand of them were killed, wounded, or captured, principally the latter; while the British loss was less than four hundred, the battle being won without difficulty. Howe seemingly had the remainder of the American army completely at his mercy, for it was cooped up on a point of land which projected into the water. But he felt so sure of his prey that he did not strike at once; and while he lingered and made ready, Washington, who had crossed over to the scene of disaster, perfected his plans, and by a masterly stroke ferried the beaten army across to New York during the night of the twenty-ninth. The following morning the king's generals woke to find that their quarry had slipped away from them.

The discouragement and despondency of the Americans were very great, Washington almost alone keeping up heart. It was resolved to evacuate New York; the chief opponent of the evacuation being General George Clinton, a hard-fighting soldier from Ulster county, where his people of Anglo-Irish origin stood well, having intermarried

with the Tappans and De Witts of the old Dutch stock. Clinton did not belong to the old colonial families of weight, being almost the only New York Revolutionary leader of note who did not; and in consequence they rather looked down on him, while he in turn repaid their dislike with interest. He was a harsh, narrow-minded man, of obstinate courage and considerable executive capacity, very ambitious, and a fanatical leader of the popular party in the contest with the Crown.

On September 15, Howe, having as usual lost a valuable fortnight by delay, moved against Manhattan Island. His troops landed at Kip's Bay, where the Americans opposed to them, mostly militia, broke in disgraceful panic and fled before them. Washington spurred to the scene in a frenzy of rage, and did his best to stop the rout, striking the fugitives with his sword, and hurling at them words of bitter scorn; but it was all in vain, the flight could not be stayed, and Washington himself was only saved from death or capture by his *aides-de-camp*, who seized his bridle-reins and forced him from the field.

However, Washington's acts and words had their effect, and as the Americans recovered from their panic they became heartily ashamed of themselves. The king's troops acted with such slowness that the American divisions south of Kip's Bay were able to march past them unmolested.

These divisions, on their retreat, were guided by a brilliant young officer, Aaron Burr, then an *aide-de-camp* to the rough, simple-hearted old wolf-killer General Putnam; and the rear was protected by Alexander Hamilton and his company of New York artillerymen, who in one or two slight skirmishes beat off the advance guard of the pursuers.

Washington drew up his army on Haarlem Heights, and the next day inflicted a smart check on the enemy. An American outpost was attacked and driven in by the English light troops, who were then themselves attacked and roughly handled by the Connecticut men and Virginians. They were saved from destruction by some regiments of Hessians and Highlanders; but further reinforcements for the Americans arrived, and the royal troops were finally driven from the field. About a hundred Americans and nearly three times as many of their foes were killed or wounded. It was nothing more than a severe skirmish; but it was a victory, and it did much to put the Americans in heart.

Besides, it was a lesson to the king's troops, and made Howe even more cautious than usual. For an entire month he remained fronting Washington's lines, which, he asserted, were too strong to be carried by assault. Then the rough sea-dogs of the fleet came to his rescue, with the usual daring and success of British seamen. His frigates

burst through the obstructions which the Americans had fondly hoped would bar the Hudson, and sailed up past the flanks of the patriot army; while the passage to the Sound was also forced. Washington had no alternative but to retreat, which he did slowly, skirmishing heavily. At White Plains, Howe drove in the American outposts, suffering more loss than he inflicted. But a fortnight later, in mid-November, a heavy disaster befell the Americans. In deference to the wishes of Congress, Washington had kept garrisons in the two forts which had been built to guard the Hudson, and Howe attacked them with sudden energy. One was evacuated at the last moment; the other was carried by assault, and its garrison of nearly three thousand men captured, after a resistance which could not be called more than respectable. Washington retreated into New Jersey with his dwindling army of but little more than three thousand men. The militia had all left him long before; and his short-term "regular" troops also went off by companies and regiments as their periods of enlistment drew to a close; and the stoutest friends of America despaired. Then, in the icy winter, Washington suddenly turned on his foes, crossed the Delaware, and by the victory of Trenton, won at the darkest moment of the war, re-established the patriot cause.

For the next seven years, New York suffered all the humiliations that fall to the lot of a conquered city. The king's troops held it as a garrison town, under military rule, and made it the headquarters of their power in America. Their foraging parties and small expeditionary columns ravaged the neighboring counties, not only of New York, but of New Jersey and Connecticut. The country in the immediate vicinity of the city was overawed by the formidable garrison and remained Loyalist; beyond this came a wide zone or neutral belt where the light troops and irregular forces of both sides fought one another and harried the wretched inhabitants. Privateers were fitted out to cruise against the shipping of the other States, precisely as the privateers of the patriots had sailed from the harbor against the shipping of Britain in the earlier days of the war.

Most of the active patriots among the townsfolk had left the city; only the poor and the faint-hearted remained behind, together with the large Tory element, and the still larger portion of the population which strove to remain neutral in the conflict. This last division contained the only persons whose conduct must be regarded as thoroughly despicable. Emphatically the highest meed of praise belongs to the resolute, high-minded, far-seeing men of the patriot party,—as distinguished from the mere demagogues and mob

leaders who, of course, are to be found associated with every great popular movement. We can also heartily respect the honest and gallant Loyalists who sacrificed all by their devotion to the king's cause. But the selfish time-servers, the timid men, and those who halt between two burdens, and can never make up their minds which side to support in any great political crisis, are only worthy of contempt.

The king's troops were not cruel conquerors; but they were insolent and overbearing, and sometimes brutal. The Loyalists were in a thoroughly false position. They had drawn the sword against their countrymen; and yet they could not hope to be treated as equals by those for whom they were fighting. They soon found to their bitter chagrin that their haughty allies regarded them as inferiors, and despised an American Tory almost as much as they hated an American Whig. The native army had not behaved well in the half-Tory city of New York; but the invading army which drove it out behaved much worse. The soldiers broke into and looted the corporation, the college, and the small public libraries, hawking the books about the streets, or exchanging them for liquor in the low saloons. They also sacked the Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Huguenot churches, which were later turned into prisons for the captured Americans; while on the other hand, the

Episcopalian churches, which had been closed owing to the riotous conduct of the patriot mob, were reopened. The hangers-on of the army,—the camp-followers, loose women, and the like,—formed a regular banditti, who infested the streets after dark, and made all outgoings dangerous. There was a completely organized system of gigantic jobbery and swindling, by which the contractors and commissaries, and not a few of the king's officers as well, were enriched at the expense of the British government; and when they plundered the government wholesale, it was not to be supposed that they would spare Tories. The rich Royalists, besides of course all the Whigs, had their portable property, their horses, provisions, and silver taken from them right and left,—sometimes by bands of marauding soldiers, sometimes by the commissaries, but always without redress or compensation, their representations to the officers in command being scornfully disregarded. They complained in their bitter anger that the troops sent to reconquer America seemed bent on campaigning less against the rebels than against the king's own friends and the king's own army-chest. Many of the troops lived at free quarters in the private houses, behaving well or ill according to their individual characters.

A few days after New York was captured it took fire, and a large portion of it was burnt up before

the flames were checked. The British soldiers were infuriated by the belief that the fire was the work of rebel incendiaries, and in the disorganization of the day they cut loose from the control of their officers and committed gross outrages, bayoneting a number of men, both Whigs and Tories, whom on the spur of the moment they accused of being privy to the plot for burning the city. Two or three years afterward there was another great fire, which consumed much of what the first had spared.

On the day of this first fire an American spy, Nathan Hale, was captured. His fate attracted much attention on account of his high personal character. He was a captain in the patriot army, a graduate of Yale, and betrothed to a beautiful girl; and he had volunteered for the dangerous task from the highest sense of duty. He was hanged the following morning, and met his death with quiet, unflinching firmness, his last words expressing his regret that he had but one life to lose for his country. He was mourned by his American comrades as deeply and sincerely and with to the full as much reason as a few years later André was mourned by the officers of the king.

Four or five thousand American soldiers were captured in the battles attending the taking of New York; and thenceforward the city was made the prison-house of all the captured patriots. The

old City Hall, the old sugar-house of the Livingstons (a gloomy stone building, five stories high, with deep narrow windows), and most of the non-Episcopal churches were turned into jails, and packed full of prisoners. It was a much rougher age than the present; the prisons of the most civilized countries were scandalous even in peace, and of course prisoners of war fared horribly. The king's officers as a whole doubtless meant to behave humanely; but the provost-marshal of New York was a very brutal man, and the cheating commissaries who undertook to feed the prisoners made large fortunes by furnishing them with spoiled provisions, curtailing their rations, and the like. The captives were huddled together in ragged, emaciated, vermin-covered and fever-stricken masses; while disease, bad food, bad water, the cold of winter, and the stifling heat of summer ravaged their squalid ranks. Every morning the death-carts drew up at the doors to receive the bodies of those who during the night had died on the filthy straw of which they made their beds. The prison-ships were even worse. They were evil, pestilent hulks of merchantmen or men-of-war, moored mostly in Wallabout Bay; and in their noisome rotten holds men died by hundreds, and were buried in shallow pits at the water's edge, the graves being soon uncovered by the tide. In after years many hogsheads of

human bones were taken from the foul ooze to receive Christian burial.

So for seven dreary years New York lay in thraldom, while Washington and his Continentals battled for the freedom of America. Nor did Washington battle only with the actual foe in the field. He had to strive also with the short-sighted and sour jealousies of the different States, the mixed impotence and intrigue of Congress, the poverty of the people, the bankruptcy of the government, the lukewarm timidity of many, the open disaffection of not a few, and the jobbery of speculators who were sometimes to be found high in the ranks of the army itself. Moreover, he had to contend with the general dislike of discipline and sustained exertion natural to the race of shrewd, brave, hardy farmers whom he led,—unused as they were to all restraint, and unable to fully appreciate the necessity of making sacrifices in the present for the sake of the future. But his soul rose above disaster, misfortune, and suffering; he had the heart of the people really with him, he was backed by a group of great statesmen, and he had won the unfaltering and devoted trust of the band of veteran soldiers with whom he had achieved victory, suffered defeat, and wrested victory from defeat for so many years; and he triumphed in the end.

On November 25, 1783, the armies of the king

left the city they had held so long, carrying with them some twelve thousand Loyalists; while on the same day Washington marched in with his troops and with the civil authorities of the State.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FEDERALIST CITY. 1783-1800.

NEW York was indeed a dreary city when the king's troops left it after their sojourn of seven years. The spaces desolated by the great fires had never been built up, but still remained covered with the charred, melancholy ruins; the churches had been dismantled, the houses rifled. Business was gone, and the channels in which it had run were filled up. The Americans on taking possession once more had to begin all over again. They set busily to work to rebuild the fallen fortunes of the town; but the destruction had been so complete, and the difficulties in the way of getting a fair start were so great, that for four years very little progress was made. Then affairs took a turn for the better; the city began to flourish as it never had flourished before, and grew in wealth and population at a steadily increasing pace.

The dismantled churches were put in order; and Trinity, which had been burnt down in the fire of 1776, was entirely rebuilt. King's College had its name changed to Columbia, and was again started, the first scholar being De Witt Clinton, a nephew of George Clinton, at the time governor of

the State. The free public library—the New York Society Library—was revived on a very much larger scale, and a good building erected, wherein to house the books. The new constitution of the independent State of New York completely did away with the religious disabilities enforced under the old provincial government, and declared and maintained absolute religious toleration and equality before the law. In consequence a Catholic church was soon built; while the Methodists increased rapidly in numbers and influence.

The New York Medical Society began its career in 1788; and one of the most curious of New York's many riots occurred shortly afterward. The mob engaged in this riot was always known as "the doctors' mob," because their wrath was directed against the young medical students and their teachers. Rumors had been rife for some time that the doctors rifled the graveyards to get subjects for dissection, which excited the populace greatly. One day a boy looking into the dissecting-room saw the medical students at work on a body, and immediately ran home and alarmed his father. Without any more reason than this, the mob suddenly assembled, hunted the doctors out of their homes, entered houses and destroyed property, refused to obey the commands of the civil officers when called on to disperse, and finally

Federal Hall, 1797.

came into collision with the State troops, who scattered them with a volley, killing and wounding several.

An occasional turbulent outbreak of this sort, however, could not check the city's growth. Commerce throve apace. The more venturesome merchants sent ships for the first time to the far China seas; and in a few years, when the gigantic warfare of the French Revolution convulsed all Europe, New York began to take its full share of the traffic which was thereby forced into neutral bottoms.

The achievement of liberty had not worked any radical change in the municipal government of the city; and the constitution under which the State entered on its new life of independence was not ultra-democratic, although of course marking a long stride toward democracy. The suffrage was rigidly limited. There were two kinds of franchise: any man owning a freehold worth £20, or paying rent to the value of forty shillings could vote for the members of the Assembly; while only a freeholder whose freehold was worth £100 could vote for senator or governor. Almost all the executive and legislative officers, whether of the State, the county, or the town, were appointed by the Council of Appointment, which consisted of the governor and four senators. The large landholding families thus still retained very much

influence. The destruction of the power of the great Tory families, however, had of course diminished the weight of the rich landowning class as a whole; and in the country the decisive power was in the hands of the small freeholding farmers.

The State was not yet governed by an absolute democracy, because as yet no one save theorists were believers in an absolute democracy, and even manhood suffrage was not advocated by many persons; while the unenfranchised were not actively discontented. The framers of the State constitution were not mere paper-government visionaries; they were shrewd, honest, practical politicians, acquainted with men and affairs. They invented new governmental methods when necessary, but they did not try to build up an entirely new scheme of government; they simply took the old system under which the affairs of the colony had been administered and altered it to suit the altered conditions of the new State. This method was of course much the wisest; but it was naturally attended by some disadvantages. The constitution-makers kept certain provisions it would have been well to throw away; they failed to guard against certain dangers that were sure to arise under the changed circumstances; and on the other hand, they created difficulties by their endeavors to guard against certain other dangers which had really vanished with the destruction of

the old system. This was notably shown by their treatment of the governorship, and by their fear of one-man power generally. The colonial governor was not elected by the people, nor responsible to them in any way; it was therefore to the popular interest to hem in his power by all lawful expedients. This was done by the colonial legislature, the only exponent and servant of the popular wish. The State governor, however, was elected by the people, was responsible to them, and was as much their servant and representative as the legislature. Nevertheless, the distrust of the non-representative, appointed, colonial governor was handed down as a legacy to his elective and representative successor. The fact that the colonial governor was made irresponsible by the method of his appointment, and that a colonial legislature appointed in the same way would have been equally irresponsible and objectionable, was seemingly overlooked, and the governorship was treated as if a single person were more dangerous than a group of persons to those who elect both, and can hold both equally responsible. Accordingly, he was hampered with the Council of Appointment, and in other ways. We have since grown wiser in this respect; but the curious fear still survives, and shows itself occasionally in odd ways,—such as standing up for the "rights" of a wholly useless and pernicious board of aldermen.

The government of the city was treated in the same way. In colonial times the freeholders elected their own aldermen, while the mayor and executive officers were appointed by the representatives of the Crown. The system was continued, the State governor and Council of Appointment being substituted for the royal governor and his council. The freeholders continued to elect their aldermen, and the constables, when constables were elected; but the mayor, the sheriff, and the other officers were appointed by the State authorities. James Duane was the first mayor thus appointed. There was thus in one respect far less local independence, far less right of local self-government granted the city then than now. The entire patronage or appointing power was centralized in the State authorities. On the other hand the city had greater liberty of action in certain directions than nowadays. The aldermen formed a real local legislature; and the city treasurer was actually accustomed to issue paper money on the credit of the municipality. On the whole, however, American cities have never possessed the absolute right to independent life and the exercise of local sovereignty that have been enjoyed by most European burghs. In America, both in colonial days and under the national government, the city has been treated merely as a geographical section of the State, and has been granted certain rights of

self-government, like other sections; though those rights are of a peculiar kind, because of the peculiar needs and characteristics of the grantee. They can be altered, amended, enlarged, or withdrawn at the pleasure of the grantor, the State legislature. Even the enormous growth of the urban population during the last half-century has not in the least altered the legal and political status of the city as the creature of the State.

Long before the Revolutionary War had closed, the old government of the confederation had demonstrated its almost utter impotence; and things grew worse after the peace. The people at large were slow to accept the idea that a new and stronger government was necessary. The struggle they had just passed through was one for liberty, against power; and they did not for the moment realize that license and anarchy are liberty's worst enemies. Their extreme individualism and their ultra-independent feelings, perpetually excited and played upon by all the legion of demagogues, inclined them to look with suspicion and distrust upon the measures by which alone they could hope to see their country raise her head among the nations of the earth. The best and wisest men of the land saw from the first the need of a real and strong union; but the mass of the people came to this idea with the utmost reluctance. It was beaten into their minds by the hard logic of

disaster. The outbreak of armed rebellion in Massachusetts and North Carolina, the general lawlessness, the low tone of commercial honor, the bankruptcy of the States and their loss of credit at home and abroad, the contempt with which the confederation was treated by European nations, and the jarring interests of the different commonwealths themselves, which threatened at any moment to break out into actual civil war,—all these combined with the wisdom and eloquence of the ablest statesmen in the land, and the vast weight of Washington's character were needed to convince an obstinate, suspicious, and narrow-minded, though essentially brave, intelligent, and patriotic people that they must cast aside their prejudices and jealousies and unite to form a stable and powerful government. Had they not thus united, their triumph in the Revolutionary War would have been a calamity for America instead of a blessing. Freedom without unity, freedom with anarchy, would have been worse than useless. The men who opposed the adoption of the present constitution of the United States committed an error to the full as great as that of the Tories themselves; and they strove quite as hard, and fortunately quite as unsuccessfully, to damage their country. The adoption of the constitution was the completion of the work begun by the War of Independence. This work had two stages, each

essential; and those who opposed it during the second stage, like those who opposed it in the first, however honest of intent, did all they could to injure America. The Tory and the disunionist, or nonunionist, were equally dangerous enemies of the national growth and well-being.

It was during this period of the foundation of the Federal government, and during the immediately succeeding period of the supremacy of the Federalists in national affairs that New York City played its greatest and most honorable part in the government of the nation. Never before or since has it occupied so high a position politically, compared to the country at large; for during these years it was the seat of power of the brilliant Federalist party of New York State. Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and at the end of the time Gouverneur Morris, lived in the city, or so near it as to have practically the weight and influence of citizens; and it was the home likewise of their arch-foe Aaron Burr, the prototype of the skilful, unscrupulous ward-politician, so conspicuous in the later periods of the city's development.

Hamilton, the most brilliant American statesman who ever lived, possessing the loftiest and keenest intellect of his time, was of course easily the foremost champion in the ranks of the New York Federalists; second to him came Jay, pure, strong and healthy in heart, body, and mind.

Both of them watched with uneasy alarm the rapid drift toward anarchy; and both put forth all their efforts to stem the tide. They were of course too great men to fall in with the views of those whose antagonism to tyranny made them averse from order. They had little sympathy with the violent prejudices produced by the war. In particular they abhorred the vindictive laws directed against the persons and property of Tories; and they had the manliness to come forward as the defenders of the helpless and excessively unpopular Loyalists. They put a stop to the wrongs which were being inflicted on these men, and finally succeeded in having them restored to legal equality with other citizens, standing up with generous fearlessness against the clamor of the mob.

As soon as the project for a closer union of the States was broached, Hamilton and Jay took it up with ardor. New York City followed their lead, but the State as a whole was against them. The most popular man within its bounds was stout old Governor Clinton, and he led the opposition to the proposed union. Clinton was a man of great strength of character, a good soldier, and stanch patriot in the Revolutionary War. He was bitterly obstinate and prejudiced, and a sincere friend of popular rights. He felt genuine distrust of any form of strong government. He was also doubt-

less influenced in his opposition to the proposed change by meaner motives. He was the greatest man in New York; but he could not hope ever to be one of the greatest in the nation. He was the ruler of a small sovereign State, the commander-in-chief of its little army, the admiral of its petty navy, the leader of its politicians; and he did not wish to sacrifice the importance that all of this conferred upon him. The cold, suspicious temper of the small country freeholders, and the narrow jealousy they felt for their neighbors, gave him excellent material on which to work.

Nevertheless, Hamilton won, thanks to the loyalty with which New York City stood by him. By untiring effort and masterful oratory he persuaded the State to send three delegates to the Federal constitutional convention. He himself went as one, and bore a prominent part in the debates; his two colleagues, a couple of anti-Federalist nobodies, early leaving him. He then came back to the city where he wrote and published, jointly with Madison and Jay, a series of letters, afterward gathered into a volume called "The Federalist,"—a book which ranks among the ablest and best which have ever been written on politics and government. These articles had a profound effect on the public mind. Finally he crowned his labors by going as a representative from the city to the State convention, and winning from a hostile body

a reluctant ratification of the Federal constitution. The townsmen were quicker witted, and politically more far-sighted and less narrow-minded than the average country folk of that day. The artisans, mechanics, and merchants of New York were enthusiastically in favor of the Federal constitution, and regarded Hamilton as their especial champion. To assist him and the cause they planned a monster procession, while the State convention was still sitting. Almost every representative body in the city took part in it. A troop of light horse in showy uniforms led, preceded by a band of trumpeters and a light battery. Then came a personator of Columbus, on horseback, surrounded by woodsmen with axes,—the axe being pre-eminently the tool and weapon of the American pioneer. Then came farmers in farmers' dress, driving horses and oxen yoked to both plow and harrow, while a new modeled threshing-machine followed. The Society of the Cincinnati came next. The trades followed: gardeners in green aprons, tailors, grain-measurers, bakers, with a huge "Federal loaf" on a platform drawn by ten bay horses; brewers, and coopers, with a stage drawn by four horses, bearing the "Federal cask," which the workmen finished as the procession moved; butchers, tanners, glovers, furriers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, whitesmiths, blacksmiths, cordwainers, peruke-makers,

florists, cabinet-makers, ivory-turners, shipwrights, riggers, and representatives of scores of other trades. In every part of the procession fluttered banners with Hamilton's figure and name, and the great feature of the show was the Federal ship *Hamilton*, drawn by ten horses. It was a thirty-two-gun frigate in miniature, twenty-seven feet long, fully rigged, and manned by thirty seamen and marines. Thirteen guns from her deck gave the signal to start, and saluted at times during the procession. The faculty and students of the University, the learned societies and professions, the merchants, and distinguished strangers brought up the rear. The procession moved out to the Bayard House, beyond the city, where a feast for six thousand people was served.

For the first year of government under the new constitution, New York was the Federal capital. It was thither that Washington journeyed to be inaugurated President with stately solemnity, April 30, 1789. The city had by this time fully recovered its prosperity; and when it became the headquarters for the ablest statesmen from all parts of the Union, its social life naturally became most attractive, and lost its provincial spirit. However, its term of glory as the capital was short, for when Congress adjourned in August, 1790, it was to meet at Philadelphia.

The political history of the city during the

twelve years of Washington's and Adams's administrations, is the history of a nearly balanced struggle between the Federalists and the anti-Federalists, who gradually adopted the name, first of Republicans and then of Democrats. As always in our political annals, individuals were constantly changing sides, often in large numbers; but as a whole, party continuity was well preserved. The men who had favored the adoption of the constitution grew into the Federal party; the men who had opposed it, and wished to construe it as narrowly as possible, and to restrict the powers of the central government even to the point of impotence, became Jeffersonian Republicans.

Hamilton and Jay were the heart of the Federalist party in the city and State. Both were typical New Yorkers of their time,—being of course the very highest examples of the type, for they were men of singularly noble and lofty character. Both were of mixed and non-English blood, Jay being of Huguenot and Hollander stock, and Hamilton of Scotch and French creole. Hamilton, born out of New York, was in some ways a more characteristic New Yorker than Jay; for New York, like the French Revolution, has always been pre-eminently a career open to talent. The distinguishing feature of the city has been its broad liberality; it throws the doors of every

career wide open to all adopted citizens. Jay lacked Hamilton's brilliant audacity and genius; but he possessed an austere purity and poise of character which his greater companion did not. He was twice elected governor of the State, serving from 1795 to 1801; indeed, he was really elected to the position in 1792, but was cheated out of it by most gross and flagrant election frauds, carried on in Clinton's interest, and connived at by him. His popularity was only temporarily interrupted even by the storm of silly and unwarranted abuse with which New York City, like the rest of the country, greeted the successful treaty which he negotiated when special envoy to England in 1794.

Hamilton was, of course, the leader of his party. But his qualities, admirably though they fitted him for the giant tasks of constructive statesmanship with which he successfully grappled, did not qualify him for party leadership. He was too impatient and dictatorial, too heedless of the small arts and unwearied, intelligent industry of the party manager. In fighting for the adoption of the constitution he had been heartily supported by the great families,—the Livingstons, the Van Rensselaers, and his own kin by marriage, the Schuylers. Afterward he was made secretary of the treasury, and Jay chief-justice, while through his efforts Schuyler and Rufus King—a New York

City man of New England origin—were made senators. Chancellor Robert R. Livingston was not an extreme believer in the ideas of Hamilton. He was also jealous of him, being a very ambitious man, and was offended at being, as he conceived, slighted in the distribution of the favors of the national administration. Accordingly, he deserted to the Republicans with all his very influential family following. This was the first big break in the Federalist ranks.

When Washington was inaugurated President he found that he had a number of appointments to make in New York. Almost all the men he thus appointed were members of the party that had urged the adoption of the constitution,—for Washington, though incapable of the bitter and unreasoning partisanship which puts party above the public welfare and morality, was much more of a party man than it has been the fashion to represent him, and during the final years of his life, in particular, was a strong Federalist. Clinton distributed the much larger and more important State patronage chiefly among his anti-Federalist adherents. As already explained, there was then no patronage at all in the hands of the local, that is, the county and city, authorities; for though an immense amount was given to the mayor, he was really a State official.

The parties were very evenly matched in New

York City, no less than in the State at large, during the closing twelve years of the century,—the period of Federalist supremacy in the nation. The city was the pivotal part of the State, and the great fighting-ground. It was carried alternately by the Federalists and Democrats, again and again. Aaron Burr, polished, adroit, unscrupulous, was the most powerful of the city Democracy. He was elected to the United States Senate to succeed Schuyler, and was in turn himself succeeded by Schuyler. Hamilton grew to regard him with especial dislike and distrust, because of his soaring ambition, his cunning, and his lack of conscience. The Livingstons backed him ardently against the Federalists, and one of their number was elected and re-elected to Congress from the city. De Witt Clinton was also forging to the front, and was a candidate for State office from the city on more than one occasion, sharing in the defeats and victories of his party. Jay's two successive victories, on the other hand, gave the Federalists the governorship of the State for six years. Under Hamilton's lead they won in New York City rather more often than they lost. In 1799 they gained a complete victory, utterly defeating the Democratic ticket, which was headed by Burr; and the legislature thus chosen elected the Federalist Gouverneur Morris to the United States Senate. The newspapers reviled their opponents

with the utmost bitterness, and often with ferocious scurrility. The leading Federalist editor in the city was the famous dictionary-maker, Noah Webster.

Party and personal feeling was intensely bitter all through these contests. Duels were frequent among the leaders, and riots not much less so among their followers. The mob turned out joyfully, on mischief bent, whenever there was any excuse for it; and the habit of holding open-air meetings, to denounce some particular person or measure, gave ample opportunity for outbreaks. At these meetings, speakers of the for-the-moment unpopular party were often rather roughly handled,—a proceeding which nowadays would be condemned by even the most heated partisans as against the rules of fair play. The anti-Federalists, at some of their public meetings, held to denounce the adoption of the constitution, or to break up the gatherings of those who supported it, got up regular riots against their opponents. At one of the meetings, held for the purpose of denouncing Jay's treaty with England,—a treaty which was of great benefit to the country, and the best that could then have been negotiated,—Hamilton was himself maltreated.

At the approach of the Presidential election of 1800, Burr took the lead in organizing the forces of the Democracy. He was himself his party's

candidate for the Vice-Presidency; and he managed the campaign with consummate skill. As before, the city was the pivotal part of the State, while the State's influence in the election at large proved to be decisive. The Democracy of the city was tending to divide into three factions. The Clintons were the natural leaders; but the Livingston family was very powerful, and was connected by marriage with such men as James Duane, a city politician of great weight, and Morgan Lewis, afterward governor; and both the Clintonians and Livingstons, jealous of one another, were united in distrust of Burr. Accordingly, the latter dexterously managed to get up a combination ticket containing the names of the most prominent members of each faction. This secured him against any disaffection. He then devoted himself to the work of organization. By his tact, address, and singular personal charm, he had gathered round him a devoted band of henchmen, mostly active and energetic young men. He made out complete lists of all the voters, and endeavored to find out how each group could be reached and influenced, and he told off every worker to the district where he could do most good. He was indefatigable in getting up ward meetings also. Hamilton fought him desperately, and with far greater eloquence, and he was on the right side; but Hamilton was a statesman rather than a

politician. He had quarreled uselessly with some of the greatest men in his own party; and he could not devote his mind to the mastery of the petty political detail and intrigue in which Burr reveled. Burr won the day by a majority of five hundred votes. As so often since in this city, the statesman, the man of mark in the national arena, went down before the skilful ward-politician.

Thus the great Federalist party fell from power, not to regain it, save in local spasms here and there. It was a party of many faults,—above all the one unforgivable fault of distrusting the people,—but it was the party which founded our government, and ever most jealously cherished the national honor and integrity. New York City has never produced any other political leaders deserving to rank with the group of distinguished Federalists who came from within, or from just without, her borders. She has never since stood so high politically, either absolutely, or relatively to the rest of the country.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BEGINNING OF DEMOCRATIC RULE. 1801-1821.

IN the electoral college, Jefferson and Burr, the Democratic-Republican candidates for President and Vice-President, had a tie vote under the curious system then prevailing, and this left the House of Representatives to decide which should be given the Presidency. The Federalists, as a whole, from hatred to Jefferson, supported Burr; but Hamilton, to his honor, opposed this move with all his might, and from thenceforth was regarded by Burr with peculiar and sinister hostility. Jefferson was finally chosen.

In the spring of 1801 the Democrats also elected the veteran George Clinton as governor, De Witt Clinton being at the same time made one of the Council of Appointment. They then for the first time had complete and unchecked control of the entire governmental system of the nation and State, and therefore of the city.

From that day to this the Democratic party has been the dominant party in New York City. Occasionally, in some period of violent political upheaval, or at a moment when the ever-existing faction-fight in its own ranks has been more than usually bitter and exhausting, its opponents for

City of New York, 1803.

as they did or did not favor the constitution; and he made his appointments in much the greatest number of cases from among the former, although allowing his political opponents a certain share of the offices. During his second term, and during Adams's presidency, very few non-Federalists indeed were appointed. In New York State Clinton was governor from the organization of the State government until 1795. He was therefore not tempted to make any removals for political reasons. Moreover, the whole question of removals and appointments was in the hands of the Council of Appointment, which was sometimes hostile to the governor. During the first ten years of Clinton's governorship there was practically but one party in the State; after the rise of the Federalists very few of them were appointed to office, Clinton dexterously managing the patronage in the interest of his party and personal friends, but always with an eye to the benefit of the public at large. When Jay succeeded as governor, he appointed mainly Federalists; but he rejected with indignation any proposition to make removals merely for political reasons.

After 1800 all this was changed. Jefferson, as has been well said, enunciated the doctrine that "to the victors belong half the spoils;" nor did he stop when by removals and resignations half of the Federalists had left office. In fact it is impossible

to act on any such theory; if half of the offices are taken as spoils, the other half must follow suit. Most of the national appointees in New York were speedily changed; and the remainder were temporarily saved only because Jefferson had in his cabinet one man, Albert Gallatin, who abhorred a general partisan proscription. The wielders of power in the State government were not so moderate. Stout old Governor Clinton protested against the meanness of making purely political removals; but he was overruled by the Council of Appointment, which was led by his nephew, De Witt Clinton. The latter had adapted Jefferson's theory to New York conditions, and declared that all heads of cities, of counties, of big offices and the like, ought to be political adherents of the administration, while all minor office-holders should be apportioned between the parties according to their numbers. Of course this meant in practice that all Federalists were to be removed and Democrats appointed in their places. In other words, the victors promptly proceeded to make a clean sweep of all the State, and therefore all the local, offices.

The city had been the stronghold of Federalism, and its officers were among the first to feel the axe. Richard Varick had made a most admirable mayor for twelve years. He was now summarily removed and Edward Livingston appointed in his place. Livingston at the same time was also

given, by the national government, the position of United States District Attorney. The mayoralty was a much coveted prize, as the incumbent not only presided over the common council and wielded much patronage, but was also presiding judge of a court of record with peculiar and extensive powers. His emoluments came in the shape of fees and perquisites, arranged on such a liberal scale as to form a very large salary. When Livingston left the office it was given to De Witt Clinton, then United States senator; and he actually resigned from the Senate to take it. However, the Senate was not then held in as high regard as now. About this time another New York senator resigned for the purpose of accepting the city postmastership.

A dozen members and connections of the Livingston family were appointed to important offices, the entire patronage of the State being divided between them and the Clintonians. They had formed an alliance to crush Burr,—receiving the hearty support of Jefferson, who always strove to break down any possible rival in his party. From this time on every faction of the Democratic party in turn, when it was in power, used the patronage mercilessly against its antagonists within and without the party, making a clean sweep of the offices; and so did the Federalists, when for a brief moment, just before the War of 1812, they again

took the reins of government in the State. It was of course but a short step from making removals for political reasons, without regard to the fitness of the incumbent, to making appointments in which considerations of political expediency outweighed considerations of propriety. The step was soon taken. The Council of Appointment even occasionally gave lucrative local offices in the city of New York to influential partisans of loose character from remote sections of the State.

The Clintonians and Livingstons, backed by all the weight of the national administration, reduced Burr's influence in the Democratic party to a nullity, and finally drove him out. He was not renominated for Vice-President, George Clinton being put in his place. In the State election, about the same time, Chancellor Livingston's brother-in-law, Morgan Lewis, was nominated for governor. Burr ran for the office as an Independent, hoping to carry not only his own faction of the Democracy, but also the entire Federalist vote. The majority of the Federalists did support him; but a large number, under Hamilton's lead, refused to do so, and though he just carried the city, he was beaten overwhelmingly in the State at large.

Burr was now a ruined man, hated by all factions and parties. Nevertheless, he played out the losing game to the last with unmoved force

and unflinching resolution; and he took cool and ferocious vengeance on his greatest and most formidable foe, Hamilton. The duel was then a recognized feature of society and politics, and had become a characteristic adjunct of the savage party contests in New York. One of Burr's followers had killed Hamilton's eldest son in a duel; and another had been severely wounded by De Witt Clinton in a similar encounter. In 1804, after his defeat for the governorship, Burr forced a duel on Hamilton, and mortally wounded him in a meeting with pistols at Weehawken, then a favorite resort for duelists. Hamilton's death caused the utmost horror and anger. The whole city mourned him, even his political opponents forgetting all save his generous and noble qualities, and the renown of his brilliant statesmanship. Burr was thenceforth an ostracized man; and dueling in New York received its death-blow.

In 1807, when Governor Lewis's successor in the governorship was to be nominated, the Clintonian or popular wing of the Democracy turned on him, defeated him for the nomination, and drove the Livingston family from power, serving them precisely as the two factions together had already served the Burrites. For a few years longer the Livingstons continued to have a certain influence in the State; and while the Federal party was still of some weight, one or two of the great Federalist

families—notably the Van Rensselaers—counted for a good deal in the political world. After the close of the War of 1812, however, the Federalists became of no moment, and the Livingstons, the aristocratic wing of the Democratic party, sank out of sight. The reign of the great families who for over a century had played so prominent a part in New York political life, was then at an end. They lost every shred of political power, and the commonwealth became what it had long been becoming, in fact as well as name, absolutely democratic. The aristocratic leaven in the loaf disappeared completely. The sway of the people was absolute from that time on.

After Washington, the greatest and best of the Federalist leaders, died, and after the Jeffersonian Democrats came into power, the two parties in New York, as elsewhere throughout the country, began to divide on a very humiliating line. They fought each other largely on questions of foreign politics. The Federalists supported the British in the European struggle then raging, and the Democrats the French. One side became known as the British, the other as the French faction. Each man with abject servility apologized for and defended the numerous outrages committed against us by the nation whose cause his party championed. It was a thoroughly unwholesome and discreditable condition of politics,—worse

than anything we have seen in the country for many years past. Neither party at this time was truly national or truly American. To their honor be it said, however, many of the New York Democrats refused to go with the extreme Jeffersonians, as regards the embargo and subsequent matters. Moreover, the Federalists, in their turn, with the exception of a minority led by Gouverneur Morris, refused to take any part in the secessionist movements of their party friends in New England, during the War of 1812. After this war the Federalists gradually disappeared; while their opponents split into a perfect tangle of factions, whose innumerable fights and squabbles it is nearly impossible and entirely unnecessary to relate in intelligible form. During all this period the political bitterness was intense, as the scurrility of the newspapers bore witness. One of its most curious manifestations was in connection with the chartering of banks. These were then chartered by special acts of the legislature; and it was almost absolutely impossible for a bank of which the officers and stockholders belonged to one party to get a charter from a legislature controlled by the other. Aaron Burr once accomplished the feat, before the Federalist overthrow in 1800, by taking advantage of the cry in New York for better water. He prepared a bill chartering a company to introduce water into the city, and tacked on an

innocent-looking provision allowing them to organize "for other purposes" as well. The charter once granted, the company went into no other enterprise save banking, and let the water-supply take care of itself.

At the beginning of the century, New York was a town of sixty thousand inhabitants. The social life was still aristocratic. The great families yet retained their prestige. Indeed, the Livingstons were at the zenith of their power in the State, and possessed enormous influence, socially and politically. They were very wealthy, and lived in much state, with crowds of liveried negro servants, free and slave. Their city houses were large and handsome, and their great country-seats dotted the beautiful banks of the Hudson.

The divisions between the upper, middle, and lower classes were sharply marked. The old families formed a rather exclusive circle, and among them the large landowners still claimed the lead, though the rich merchants, who were of similar ancestry, much outnumbered them, and stood practically on the same plane. But the days of this social and political aristocracy were numbered. They lost their political power first, being swamped in the rising democratic tide; and their social primacy—mere emptiness when thus left unsupported—followed suit a generation or so later, when their descendants were gradually

ousted even from this last barren rock of refuge by those whose fathers or grandfathers had, out of the humblest beginnings, made their own huge fortunes. The fall of this class, as a class, was not to be regretted; for its individual members did not share the general fate unless they themselves deserved to fall. The descendant of any old family who was worth his salt, still had as fair a chance as any one else to make his way in the world of politics, of business, or of literature; and according to our code and standard, the man who asks more is a craven.

However, the presence of the great families undoubtedly gave a pleasant flavor to the gay social life of New York during the early years of the century. It had a certain half-provincial dignity of its own. The gentlemen still dressed, with formal and elaborate care, in the costume then worn by the European upper classes,—a costume certainly much more picturesque, if less comfortable, than that of the present day. The ladies were more apt to follow the fashions of Paris than of London. All well-to-do persons kept their own heavy carriages, and often used them for journeys no less than for pleasure drives. The social season was at its height in the winter, when there was an uninterrupted succession of dinners, balls, tea-parties, and card-parties. One of the great attractions was the Park Theater, capable

of holding twelve hundred persons, and always thronged when there was a good play on the boards. Large sleighing-parties were among the favorite pastimes, dinner being taken at some one of the half-dozen noted taverns a few miles without the city, while the drive back was made by torchlight if there was no moon. Marriages were scenes of great festivity. In summer the fashionable promenade was the Battery Park, with its rows and clumps of shade-trees, and broad walk by the water; and on still nights there was music played in boats on the water. The "gardens" —such as Columbia Gardens, and Mt. Vernon Gardens[1] on Broadway—were also meeting-places in hot weather. They were enclosed pieces of open ground, covered with trees, from which colored lanterns hung in festoons. There were fountains in the middle, and little tables at which ice-cream was served. Round the edges were boxes and stalls, sometimes in tiers; and there was usually a fine orchestra. When the hot months approached, the custom was to go to some fashionable watering-place, such as Ballston Springs, where the gaiety went on unchecked.

The houses of the well-to-do were generally of brick, and those of the poorer people of wood. There were thirty-odd churches; and the two principal streets or roads were Broadway and the

[1] This was at Leonard Street, then "a little out of town."

Corporal Thompson's House of Refreshment, 1801.

Bowery. After nightfall the streets were lighted with oil lamps; each householder was obliged to keep the part of the thoroughfare in front of his own house clean swept. There were large markets for vegetables, fruits, and meat, brought in by the neighboring farmers, and for fish and game, —Long Island furnishing abundance of venison, and of prairie fowl, or, as they were then called, heath hens. Hickory wood was generally used for fuel; the big chimneys being cleaned by negro sweep boys. Milk was carried from house to house in great cans, by men with wooden yokes across their shoulders. The well-water was very bad; and pure spring-water from without the city was hawked about the streets in carts, and sold by the gallon.

The sanitary condition of the city was very bad. A considerable foreign immigration had begun,— though a mere trickle compared to what has come in since,—and these immigrants, especially the Irish, lived in cellars and miserable hovels. Every few years the city was scourged by a pestilence of yellow fever. Then every citizen who could, left town; and among those who remained, the death rate ran up far into the hundreds.

As the city grew, the class of poor who were unable, at least in times of stress, to support themselves, grew likewise; and organized charities were started in the effort to cope with the evil.

Orphan asylums and hospitals were built. Societies for visiting the poor in their homes were started, and did active work,—and by their very existence showed how much New York already differed from the typical American country district or village, where there were few so poor as to need such relief, and hardly any who would not have resented it as an insult. As early as 1798 one society reported that it had supported through a hard winter succeeding a summer of unusual sickness, over three hundred widows and orphans who would otherwise have had to take refuge in the almshouse. It goes without saying, however, that this acute poverty was always local and temporary; there was then no opportunity for the pauperism and misery of overcrowded tenement-house districts.

The first savings-bank was established in 1816. The foundations of our free-school system were laid in 1805. The Dutch had supported schools at the public expense during their time of supremacy; but after their government was overturned, the schooling had been left to private effort. Every church had its own school, learning being still the special property of the clergy; and there were plenty of private schools and charity free schools in addition. Public-spirited citizens, however, felt that in a popular government the first duty of the State was to see that the chil-

dren of its citizens were trained as they should be. Accordingly, a number of prominent citizens organized themselves into a society to establish a free school, obtained a charter from the legislature, and opened their school in 1806. They expressly declared that their aim was only to provide for the education of such poor children as were not provided for by any religious society; for at that time the whole theory of education was that it should be religious, and almost all schools were sectarian. The free schools increased in number under the care of the society, and finally grew to be called public schools; and by growth and change the system was gradually transformed, until one of the cardinal points of public policy in New York, as elsewhere in the northern United States, became the establishment of free, non-sectarian public schools, supported and managed by the State, and attended by the great mass of the children who go to school at all. The sectarian schools, all-important before the rise of the public-school system, have now been thrust into an entirely secondary position. Perhaps the best work of the public school has been in the direction of Americanizing immigrants, or rather the children of immigrants; and it would be almost impossible to overestimate the good it has accomplished in this direction.

Many scientific and literary societies were

founded in New York early in the present century. The city began to have room for an occasional man of letters or science, in addition to the multitude of lawyers and clergymen,—the lawyer, in particular, occupying the front rank in Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary days. A queer, versatile scholar and student of science, who also dabbled in politics and philanthropy, Dr. Samuel Latham Mitchell, was one of New York's most prominent and most eccentric characters at this time. Charles Brockden Brown published one or two mystical novels which in their day had a certain vogue, even across the Atlantic, but are now only remembered as being the earliest American ventures of the kind; and in 1807 Washington Irving may be said to have first broken ground in the American field of true literature with his "Knickerbocker's History of New York."

This same year of 1807 was rendered noteworthy by the beginning of steam navigation. Robert Fulton, after many failures, at last invented a model that would work, and took his steamboat, the *Clermont*, on a trial trip from New York to Albany and back. Thus he began the era of travel by steam, to which, more than to any other one of the many marvelous discoveries and inventions of the age, we owe the mighty and far-reaching economic and social changes which this century has witnessed. Fulton's claim to the

discovery was disputed by a score of men,—among them his fellow-citizens, John Fitch, Nicholas Roosevelt, and John Stevens, all of whom had built steamboats which had just not succeeded. But the fact remained that he was the first one to apply the principle successfully; and to him the credit belongs. Very soon there were a number of American steamboats in existence. In 1811 Nicholas Roosevelt introduced them on the Mississippi, while Stevens took his to the Delaware. During the War of 1812 Fulton planned and built at New York, under the direction of Congress, a great steam frigate, with cannon-proof sides and heavy guns; she worked well, but peace was declared just before she was ready, otherwise she would probably have anticipated the feats of the *Merrimac* by half a century.

It was a calamity to the city that this steam frigate was not ready earlier; for New York was blockaded closely throughout this war, which was far from popular with her merchants. Yet they ought to have seen that the war was most necessary to their commercial well-being, no less than to their honor and national self-respect; for the frigates of Britain had for a dozen years of nominal peace kept the city under a more or less severe blockade, in the exercise of the odious right of search. They kept a strict watch over all outgoing and incoming ships, hovering off the coast

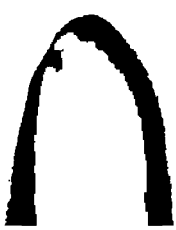
like hawks, and cruising in the lower bay, firing on coasters and merchantmen to bring them to. Once they even killed one of the crew of a coaster in this manner, and the outrage went unavenged. When war at last came, many of the ardent young men of the city, who had chafed under the insults to which they had been exposed, went eagerly into the business of privateering, which combined both profit and revenge. New York sent scores of privateers to sea to prey on the enemy's commerce; and formidable craft they were, especially toward the end of the war, when the typical privateer was a large brig or schooner of wonderful speed and beauty, well armed and heavily manned. The lucky cruiser, when many prizes were taken, brought wealth to owner, captain, and crew; and some of the most desperate sea-struggles of the kind on record took place between New York privateers of this class and boat expeditions, sent to cut them out by hostile frigates or squadrons,—the most famous instance being the really remarkable fight of the brig *General Armstrong* at Fayal.

With the close of the war, the beginning of immigration from Europe on a vast scale, and the adoption of a more radically democratic State constitution, the history of old New York may be said to have come to an end, and that of the modern city, with its totally different conditions, to

have begun. The town has never, before or since, had a population so nearly homogeneous as just after this second war with Great Britain; the English blood has never been so nearly dominant as at that time, nor the English speech so nearly the sole speech in common use. The Dutch language had died out, and the Dutch themselves had become completely assimilated. With the Huguenot French this was even more completely the case.[1] German was only spoken by an insignificant and dwindling remnant. Of the Irish immigrants, most had become absorbed in the population; the remainder was too small to be of any importance. The negroes no longer formed a noteworthy element in the population, and gradual emancipation, begun in 1799, became complete by 1827. For thirty-five years after the Revolution the great immigration was from New England, and the consequent influx of nearly pure English blood was enormous. The old New Yorkers regarded this "New England invasion," as they called it, with jealous hostility; but this feeling was a mere sentiment, for the newcomers speedily became almost indistinguishable from the old residents. Even in religious matters the people were more in unison than ever before or since. The bitter jealousies and antagonisms

[1] However, one Huguenot church has always kept up its language, mainly for the use of foreigners.

between the different Protestant sects, so characteristic of colonial times, had greatly softened; and Roman Catholicism was not as yet of importance. There was still no widespread and grinding poverty, and there were no colossal fortunes. The conditions of civic or municipal life then were in no way akin to what they are now, and none of the tremendous problems with which we must now grapple had at that time arisen.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE GROWTH OF THE COMMERCIAL AND DEMOCRATIC CITY. 1821-1860.

IN 1820 New York City contained about a hundred and twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The demand for a more democratic State constitution found its realization in the convention of 1822. The constitutional amendments proposed and adopted at this time, and in the following years, were in the direction of increasing the direct influence of the people by widening the suffrage, and of decentralizing power and increasing the amount of local self-government. The Council of Appointment was abolished. In 1822 the suffrage was given to all taxpayers; and in 1826 all property qualifications were abolished, except in the case of negroes, who were still required to be freeholders. It is noteworthy that the most bitter opponents of negro suffrage were the very men who most zealously championed universal suffrage for all white citizens, no matter how poor and ignorant; while on the other hand, the old Federalists and Conservatives who strenuously opposed universal suffrage, and prophesied that it would bring dire disaster on the State, favored granting equal rights to the blacks. It

is small wonder that the free blacks should generally have voted with the Federalists,—precisely as at a later date in the Southern States, as for instance North Carolina, such of the free blacks as even in the days of slavery were allowed to vote, always followed the lead of the local gentry. The white mob which detested the white "aristocrats," and believed in the most absolute democracy among the whites themselves, clamored loudly against the blacks, and favored the establishment of aristocratic and inferior castes separated by the color line. The conduct of the popular party toward the negroes was the reverse of creditable.

Under the constitution of 1822 the mayor of New York was chosen by the municipal council; after 1834 he was elected by the citizens. The constitution of 1846, the high-water mark of democracy, which made some very good and a few very bad changes in the State government, affected the municipal system comparatively little, with the important exception that it provided for the election not only of local but of judicial officers. The election of judges by universal suffrage in this great city, even though it has worked much better than was expected, has nevertheless now and then worked badly. Still the long terms and high salaries, and above all the general popular appreciation of the high honor and dignity conferred by

the office, have hitherto given us on the whole a very good bench.

The distinguishing features of the life of the city between 1820 and 1860 were its steady and rapid growth in population, the introduction of an absolutely democratic system of government, the immense immigration from abroad, completely changing the ethnic character of the population, the wonderful growth of the Roman Catholic Church and the great material prosperity, together with the vast fortunes made by many of the business men, usually of obscure and humble ancestry.

The opening of the Erie Canal gave an extraordinary impetus to the development of the city. The canal had been planned, and reports concerning it drawn up, at different times by various New York citizens, notably by Gouverneur Morris; but the work was actually done, in spite of violent opposition, by De Witt Clinton. Clinton was, more than any other man, responsible for the introduction of the degrading system of spoils politics into the State; most of his political work was mere faction fighting for his own advancement; and he was too jealous of all competitors, and at the same time not a great enough man, ever to become an important figure in the national arena. But he was sincerely proud of his city and State, and very much interested in all philanthropic, scientific, and

industrial movements to promote their honor and material welfare. He foresaw the immense benefits that would be brought about by the canal, and the practicability of constructing it; and by indomitable resolution and effort he at last committed the State to the policy he wished. In 1817 the work was started, and in 1825 it was completed, and the canal opened.

During the same period regular lines of steamboats were established on both the Hudson and the Sound; and the steamboat service soon became of great commercial importance. It was a couple of decades later before the railroads became factors in the city's development, but they soon completely distanced the steamboats, and finally even the canal itself; and as line after line multiplied, they became the great inland feeders of New York's commerce. The electric telegraph likewise was introduced before the middle of the century; and, as with the steamboat, its father, the man who first put it into practical operation, was a New Yorker, Samuel Morse,—though there were scores of men who had perceived its possibilities, and vainly striven to translate them into actual usefulness. Steam transportation and electricity have been the two prime factors in the great commercial and industrial revolutions of this century; and New York has produced the two men who deserve the most credit for their introduction.

Fulton and Morse stand as typical of the inventive, mechanical, and commercial genius of the city at the mouth of the Hudson.

Few commercial capitals have ever grown with more marvelous rapidity than New York. The great merchants and men of affairs who have built up her material prosperity, have not merely enriched themselves and their city; they have also played no inconsiderable part in that rapid opening up of the American continent during the present century, which has been rendered possible by the eagerness and far-reaching business ambition of commercial adventurers, wielding the wonderful tools forged by the science of our day. The merchant, the "railroad king," the capitalist who works or gambles for colossal stakes, bending to his purpose an intellect in its way as shrewd and virile as that of any statesman or warrior,—all these, and their compeers, are and have been among the most striking and important, although far from the noblest, figures of nineteenth-century America.

Two New Yorkers of great note in this way may be instanced as representatives of their class,—John Jacob Astor and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Astor was originally a German pedler, who came to the city immediately after the close of the Revolution. He went into the retail fur-trade, and by energy, thrift, and far-sightedness, soon pushed

his way up so as to be able to command a large amount of capital; and he forthwith embarked on ventures more extensive in scale. The fur-trade was then in the North almost what the trade in gold and silver had been in the South. Vast fortunes were made in it, and the career of the fur-trader was checkered by romantic successes and hazardous vicissitudes. Astor made money with great rapidity, and entered on a course of rivalry with the huge fur companies of Canada. Finally, in 1809, he organized the American Fur Company, under the auspices of the State of New York, with no less a purpose than the establishment of a settlement of trappers and fur-traders at the mouth of the Columbia. He sent his parties out both by sea and overland, established his posts, and drove a thriving trade; and doubtless he would have anticipated by a generation the permanent settlement of Oregon, if the war had not broken out, and his colony been destroyed by the British. The most substantial portion of his fortune was made out of successful ventures in New York City real estate; and at his death he was one of the five richest men in the world. His greatest service to the city was founding the Astor Library.

Vanderbilt was a Staten Island boy, whose parents were very poor, and who therefore had to work for his living at an early age. Before the War of 1812, when a lad in his teens, he had been

himself sailing a sloop as a ferry-boat, between Staten Island and New York, and soon had saved enough money to start a small line of them. After the war he saw the possibilities of the steamboat, and began to run one as captain, owning a share in it as well. He shortly saved enough to become his own capitalist, and removed to New York in 1829. He organized steam lines on the Hudson and Sound, making money hand over hand; and in 1849—the period of the California gold fever—he turned his attention to ocean steamships, and for several years carried on a famous contest with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, for the traffic across the Isthmus to California. He was drawn into antagonism with the filibuster Walker, because of his connection with the Central American States, and became one of the forces which compassed that gray-eyed adventurer's downfall. Then he took to building and managing railways, and speculating in them, and by the end of his days had amassed a colossal fortune. The history of the Wall Street speculations in which he took part, forms much the least attractive portion of the record of his life.

Astor and Vanderbilt were foremost and typical representatives of the commercial New York of their day, exactly as Hamilton and Jay were of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary city. Neither was of English blood; Astor was a

German, and Vanderbilt a descendant of the old Dutch settlers. Both were of obscure parentage, and both hewed their way up from the ranks by sheer force of intellect and will-power. Of course neither deserves for a moment to be classed on the city's roll of honor with men like Hamilton and Jay, or like Cooper and Irving.

Before the days of steamship, railroad, and telegraph, were the days of the fast "clippers," whose white wings sped over the ocean up to the time of the Civil War. The New York clippers, like those of Baltimore, were famous for their speed, size, and beauty. Their builders exhausted every expedient to bring them to perfection; and for many years after steamers were built they maintained a nearly equal fight against these formidable rivals. Crack vessels among them repeatedly made the voyage to England in a fortnight. It is a curious fact that the United States, which only rose to power at the very end of the period of sailing-vessels, and which has not been able to hold her own among those nations whose sons go down to the sea in ships, should nevertheless, during the first half of the present century, have brought the art of building, handling—and when necessary, fighting—these same old-time sailing-ships, in all their varieties of man-of-war, privateer, merchantman, and whaler, to the highest point ever attained. The frigates and privateers were perfected during

the War of 1812; the merchant clippers were immensely improved after that date. The older vessels were slow, tubby craft; and they were speedily superseded by the lines of swift packet-ships,—such as the *Blackball*, *Red Star* and *Swallow Tail*—established one after the other by enterprising and venturesome New York merchants. The packet-ships sailed for European ports. Before the middle of the century, lines of clippers were established to trade, and also to carry passengers to California and the China seas. In size they sometimes went up to two thousand tons; and compared to European merchant vessels, their speed and safety were such that they commanded from shippers half as much again in payment for the freightage on cargoes of teas and other Eastern goods.

The large importers, and their captains as well, made money rapidly by these ships; yet now, from divers causes, the carrying-trade has slipped through their fingers. But the city's growth has not been checked by this loss. The commerce-bringing fleets of other nations throng its harbor, while its merchants retain their former energy, and command their former success in other lines; and the steady and rapid growth of factories of many kinds has changed the city into a great manufacturing center. There is no danger of any loss of commercial prosperity, nor of any falling off in the

amount of wealth as a whole, nor of any diminution in the ranks of the men who range from well-to-do to very rich. The danger arises from the increase of grinding poverty among vast masses of the population in certain quarters, and from the real or seeming increase in the inequality of conditions between the very rich and the very poor; in other words, as colossal fortunes grow up on the one hand, there grows up on the other a large tenement-house population, partly composed of wage-earners who never save anything, and partly of those who never earn quite enough to give their families even the necessaries of life.

This ominous increase in the numbers of the class of the hopelessly poor is one among the injuries which have to a greater or less degree offset the benefits accruing to the country during the present century, because of the unrestricted European immigration. There was considerable immigration from abroad even before the War of 1812; but it did not become of great moment until after the close of the contest. The volume then swelled very rapidly. In 1818 and 1819 over twenty thousand immigrants arrived in New York, and were reported at the mayor's office. Most of them were very poor and ignorant, and at first ill able to cope with their new surroundings. They housed in sheds, cellars, and rookeries of all kinds, and in winter time were reduced to desperate

straits for food, thousands being supported for short periods by the charity of private citizens and of organized relief associations. They did not go out to the frontier, and like most of the immigrants of the present century preferred to huddle in the large cities rather than to go into the country. Year by year the mass of immigration increased, though with occasional and purely temporary fluctuations. By 1830 it had already become so great as to dwarf all movements of the kind which the world had hitherto seen; and after the potato famine in Ireland and the revolutions of 1848 in continental Europe, fugitives from hunger or political oppression came over by hundreds of thousands. A greater proportion of these immigrants, relatively to the population, made their homes in New York than in any other part of the country. The large majority of them were of course from the lower or lower-middle classes.

The immigration worked a complete ethnic overturn in the character of the population,—an overturn of which there had been several similar instances already in the city's history. The immigrants and their children soon grew to outnumber the descendants of the old pre-Revolutionary inhabitants, and the process was hastened by the fact that very many of the latter, probably far more than half, themselves drifted westward, with the restless love of change so characteristic of their

nation. There were many English, Scotch, and Welsh, and a few Scandinavians among the immigrants, and these speedily amalgamated with, and became indistinguishable from, the natives. But by far the largest number—probably more than five-sixths of those settled in New York City during the half-century before the close of the Civil War—were Irish and Germans, the former being at this time much in the lead.

The Germans had formed an important element of the city's population ever since the days of Leisler, who was himself a German, and, with the exception of Stuyvesant, the most important figure in the history of the colonial town. They were probably, in point of numbers and importance, at no time lower than the fourth in rank among the nationalities which were being fused together to make New York citizens. By the beginning of the present century the descendants of the old German immigrants had become completely Americanized. The new swarms of Germans who came hither, revived the use of the German tongue; and as they settled in large bodies,—often forming the entire population of certain districts,—they clung pertinaciously to their own customs, kept to their own churches, and published their own newspapers. Nevertheless, the public-school system and the all-pervading energy of American life proved too severe solvents

to be resisted even by the German tenacity. Some remained un-Americanized in a sodden, useless lump; but after a generation or two this ceased to be the case with the majority. The children of the first generation were half, and the grandchildren in most cases wholly, Americanized,—to their own inestimable advantage. As long as they remained mere foreigners, speaking an alien tongue, they of course occupied a lower grade in the body politic and social than that to which their good qualities entitled them. As they became Americanized in speech and customs, they moved up to the same level with the native born. Perhaps two-thirds were nominally Protestants, and these had no religious prejudices to overcome or be hampered by. They were thrifty, hardworking, and on the whole law-abiding, and they not only rose rapidly in the social scale, but as soon as they learned to speak our language by preference, as their native tongue, they became indistinguishable from the other Americans with whom they mixed. They furnished leading men to all trades and professions, and many founded families of high social and political distinction. They rendered great service to the city by their efforts to cultivate a popular taste for music and for harmless public pleasures. Only the fact that the Lutheran clergy clung to the German language, prevented their church from becoming the most

important of the Protestant churches. The Catholic or Celtic Irish formed, in point of numbers, the most important class among the new immigrants. Those of their race who had come here in colonial days were for the most part only imported bond-servants and criminals. Unlike the Germans, they had never formed an element of appreciable weight in the community until after the Revolution. Soon after the opening of the present century they became the most numerous of the immigrants and began to form a class of New Yorkers whose importance steadily increased. They displayed little of the German frugality and aptitude for business, and hence remained to a far larger extent mere laborers,—comparatively few rising, at least for the first generation or two, to non-political positions of importance; and they furnished much more than their share to the city's turbulent and lawless elements, for in their new surroundings they were easily misled by both native and foreign-born demagogues and agitators. On the other hand, they have invariably proved admirable soldiers when the city has sent out her quota of troops in time of war; they have taken little part in anarchical and socialistic movements, and—though this is a quality of a more doubtful kind—they have mastered the intricacies of local politics with astonishing ease. The improvement in their material condition became very marked

after three or four decades. Moreover, their less fortunate qualities were such as inevitably attended the peculiar conditions of their life in the old country; and these gradually tended to disappear as the successive generations grew up on American soil. The fact that they already spoke English gave them an immense advantage, compared to the Germans, in that they were able from the outset to mingle freely in American life; but the difference of religion tended to keep at least the first two generations apart from the citizens of old American stock. The Irish, like the Germans, came over in such numbers that they were able to introduce their own separate social life; but in both cases the ambitious and energetic among the descendants of the immigrants soon grew to realize that they must become thoroughgoing Americans in order to win the great prizes of American life, while every family that acquired wealth and culture desired nothing so much as to get a foothold in the upper circles of the American portion of the community.

By the outbreak of the Civil War the flood of immigration had swamped the older "native American" stock, as far as numbers went. The mixed blood of New York had been mixed still further. It is curious to trace the successive additions of race elements to the population of the city. At its founding the Dutch were dominant,

but with a considerable Walloon element, which was soon absorbed by the Hollanders, while there was a larger element of French Huguenots, who kept coming in, and were absorbed more slowly. There were also many English, and a few Germans. After the final English conquest there was a fair amount of immigration from England and Scotland; the Huguenots also continued to come in for a little while, and there was a large German and a considerable Scotch-Irish immigration. At the end of the Revolution all of these peoples had grown to use the English tongue, and were fast being welded together; but the great majority of the citizens were non-English by blood. There then began a great inrush of New Englanders; and for the first time the citizens of English blood grew to outnumber those of any other strain,—all however being soon fused together, and becoming purely American. The immense immigration between 1820 and 1860 changed this. By the latter date the men of Irish birth and blood had become more numerous than any others; the Germans, at some distance off, next; while the native Americans, who still led and controlled the others, were a close third. Of course, however, the older races of the city made the mold into which the newer were poured. The task is sometimes slow and difficult, but in the end the German or Irishman is always Americanized;

and his influence upon the country of his adoption, although considerable, is as nothing compared to the influence of the country upon him.

The wonderful growth of the Catholic Church was of course due to the immigration, especially of the Irish. In colonial times Roman Catholicism had not been tolerated. When complete religious freedom was established, with the organization of the new government, the Catholics began to come in, and soon after the Revolution they built a church; but its congregation led a fitful life for the first thirty years. There were years of prosperity, when a convent, a school, etc., were established; and years of adversity, when they were abandoned. The congregation was, of course, composed mainly of immigrants, chiefly Irish, even thus early; but there were enough Germans and French to make it necessary to hold services also in those languages. But on the whole the Church at this time languished, and religious instruction and supervision were provided for but a small portion of the Catholic immigrants. Accordingly, they and their children became to a very large extent Protestant. After the close of the War of 1812, matters were radically changed. New York became the permanent seat of a bishopric, a multitude of priests came in, churches were built, and the whole organization sprang into vigorous life. The immense Irish

immigration gave the Church the stamp it yet retains, and settled that its language should be English, thus turning it into a potent force for Americanizing the Catholic immigrants from continental Europe. As early as 1826 the New York Catholics murmured against having a French bishop put over them; though by that time it had been found necessary to establish separate German churches, as the German immigration had also begun. So enormous had been the inrush during the preceding dozen years, that at this date the Catholics already formed in the neighborhood of a fifth of the city's population. The Protestant sects became seriously alarmed at this portentous growth of the Church of Rome, and for the thirty years preceding the Civil War there was fierce religious and political agitation against it, the feeling growing so bitter that there were furious riots, accompanied with much bloodshed, between Catholic and Protestant mobs in the great cities, including New York. Nevertheless, the Church went on steadily growing; and much, though by no means all, of the bitterness gradually wore away. Catholicism gained in numbers by converts from among the native Americans, often of high social standing; though this gain was probably much more than offset by the loss of Catholic immigrants who drifted into Protestantism. The Irish have formed the mainstay of the Church in

America; and this, and the readiness with which on the whole it has adapted itself to American conditions, has determined its development. The Catholic Church in Ireland, unlike the Catholic Church in most portions of continental Europe, has been the Church of popular feeling; and American Catholicism also gradually grew to identify itself with all movements in the interests of the masses of the people, while it was likewise affected by the American theories of complete religious toleration, and separation of Church from State. In other words, it tended to become Americanized. It was at first, outside of Baltimore, and the French, Spanish, and Indian missions, a church of poor immigrants, chiefly laborers. Many of the descendants of these immigrants acquired wealth, or rose to distinction in the community, and the different nationalities began to fuse together, and to assimilate themselves in speech and customs to the old American stock. In consequence, the Church gradually tended to grow into one of the regular American churches, even though still all-powerful among the immigrants; and it began to possess its proper share of men of high social and intellectual position.

When, in the twenties, the immigration began to attain formidable dimensions, it excited much uneasiness in the minds of many of the native citizens, who disliked and looked down on the

foreigners. Much of this feeling was wholly unjustifiable, while much of it was warranted by the fact that the new-comers contributed far more than their share to the vice, crime, misery, and pauperism of the community. They were popularly held responsible for various epidemics of disease,—notably a terrible visitation of cholera in 1832.

New York having been peopled by relays of immigrants of different nationality, each relay in turn, as it became Americanized, looked down upon the next, as has already been said. So it is at the present day. The grandchildren of the Germans and Irish, to whom such strenuous objection was made sixty years ago, now in turn protest against the shoals of latter-day Sclavonic and Italian incomers. Race and religious antipathy have caused not a few riots during the present century, in New York; and this was especially the case during the period covered by the forty years preceding the Civil War.

However, riots of various kinds were common all through this period; for the city mob was far more disorderly and less under control than at present. Nor were the foreigners by any means the only ones to be found in its ranks, for it contained a large and very dangerous element of native American roughs. One specially frequent form of riot was connected with the theaters. The mob was

very patriotic and boisterously anti-British; and on the other hand many English actors who came to America to make money were unwise enough to openly express their contempt for the people from whom they were to make it. Rival theatrical managers would carefully circulate any such remarks, and the mob would then swarm down to the theater, fill it in a dense mass, and pelt the unfortunate offender off the boards as soon as he appeared. The misused actor was not always a foreigner; for a like treatment was occasionally awarded to any American against whom the populace bore a grudge. Certain of the newspapers—not a few of which were edited by genuine Jefferson Bricks—were always ready to take a hand in hounding down any actor whom they had cause to dislike. Some of these outbreaks were very serious; and they culminated in 1849 in the "Astor Place," or "Opera-house" riot. On this occasion the mob tried to gut the theater where an obnoxious English actor was playing, but were held in check by the police. They then gathered by thousands in the streets, and were finally fired into by the troops, and dispersed with a loss of twenty killed,—a most salutary and excellent lesson.

Other riots were due to more tangible troubles. The enormous immigration had created a huge class of unfortunates who could with difficulty

earn their daily bread, and any period of sudden and severe distress threw them into a starving condition. There were one or two great fires which were really appalling calamities to the city; and the terrible panic of 1836-37 produced the most widespread want and suffering. Flour went up to fifteen dollars a barrel. The poor were cast into abject misery, and were inflamed by demagogues, who raised the cry of "the poor against the rich," and denounced in especial the flour and grain dealers. The "Bread Riots" of January, 1837, were the result. A large mob assembled in response to placards headed "Bread! Meat! Rent! Fuel! their prices must come down!" and assailed and sacked some of the stores and warehouses, strewing the streets with flour and wheat. It was toward nightfall before the police could restore order. There were also savage labor riots, generally caused when the trades-unions ordered a strike, and strove to prevent other workmen from taking the places of the strikers. In all of these cases the masses of the rioters were foreign born.

There were also riots against the Abolitionists; their meetings were broken up and their leaders sometimes maltreated. Moreover there were bloody encounters between native American and foreign—usually Irish—mobs. Finally there were frequent riots about election time, at the great

open-air meetings and processions, between the adherents of the rival parties.

Politically, the steady movement toward making the government absolutely democratic was checked by curious side-fights. The Whig party was the regular, and at times the successful, opponent of the Democracy throughout the middle part of this period. The Democratic party contained, as always, the bulk of the foreign and Catholic voters; its strength lay in the poor wards. Hence it was always in danger when any new popular faction arose. In 1830 a short-lived labor party was started, but this came to nothing. In 1834 the first elective mayor was chosen by universal suffrage. The contest was very close; and the Democrat, Lawrence, was chosen over the Whig, Verplanck, by only a couple of hundred votes, out of thirty-five thousand. Among the heads of the Democratic party were still to be found some influential merchants and the like; as yet the mere demagogue politicians did not dare to make themselves the titular leaders. Lawrence was a wealthy gentleman. On New Year's day he threw open his doors to all callers, as was then the general custom. But the mass of ward-leaders and political "heelers" of every kind who thronged his house, turned it into a bear garden, destroying everything until he had to summon the police to rid him of his guests. The Democracy

was not yet quite used to power, and did not know how to behave.

A year or two later one of the labor parties led a brief career in the city, arising—as has usually been the case—from a split in the Democratic party. Its adherents styled themselves "equal-rights men" or "anti-monopolists." By outsiders they were usually dubbed "Loco-focos," because at the outset of their career, in the course of a stormy meeting of the city Democracy in a hall, their opponents put out the gas; whereupon they, having thoughtfully provided themselves with loco-foco matches, relit the gas, and brought the meeting to a triumphant close. The chief points in their political creed were hostility to banks and corporations generally, and a desire to have all judges elected for short terms, so as to have them amenable to the people,—that is, to have them administer the law, not in accordance with the principles of justice, but in accordance with the popular whim of the moment. They split up the Democratic party, and thus were of service to the Whigs during the two or three years of their existence.

The Native American party began to make a stir about the time the Loco-focos came to an end. The Native Americans represented simply hostility to foreigners in general, and Catholic foreigners in particular. They therefore had no permanent

root, as they merely represented a prejudice,—for depriving foreigners already here of political rights is a piece of iniquitous folly, having no connection with the undoubted and evident wisdom of limiting immigration to our shores, and exercising a rigid supervision thereover. The Native Americans led an intermittent party life for a score of years, ending as the Know-nothings, who were swept out of sight by the rise of the Republican party. In 1841 the Catholics very foolishly and wrongfully tried to form a separate party of their own, on account of irritation over the disposal of the public-school fund. They insisted that a portion of it should be given to them for their sectarian schools, and organized a party to support only such candidates as would back their demands. But by this time the people had become wedded to the public-school system, and the effort proved wholly fruitless. The only result was to give a great start to the Native American party, which as a consequence, in 1844, actually carried the mayoralty election.

In spite of occasional interludes of this kind, however, the Democratic party, under the leadership of Tammany Hall, in the long run always recovered their hold on the reins. As the years went by, the party escaped more and more from the control of the well-to-do merchants and business men, and fell into the hands of professional

politicians of unsavory character. The judiciary was made elective in 1846; and most local officers were thenceforth chosen in this manner. The mass of poor and ignorant voters, mainly foreign born, but drilled and led by unscrupulous Americans, held the command, and contemptuously disregarded their former leaders. Business men shrank from going into politics. There was not much buying of voters, but election frauds, and acts of brutal intimidation and violence at the polls, became more and more common. The Federal, State, and local offices were used with absolute shamelessness to reward active political work. By the fifties, politics had sunk as low as they well could sink. Fernando Wood, an unscrupulous and cunning demagogue, whose financial honesty was more than doubtful, skilled in manipulating the baser sort of ward politicians, became the "boss" of the city, and was finally elected mayor. His lieutenants were brutal rowdies of the type of Isaiah Rynders, his right hand man; they ruled by force and fraud, and were hand in glove with the disorderly and semi-criminal classes. Both Wood and Rynders were native Americans, the former of English, the latter of Dutch ancestry. It would be difficult to pick out any two foreign-born men of similar stamp who were as mischievous. In 1850 street railways were started, and the franchises for them were in many cases procured

by the bribery of the Common Council. This proved the final touch; and it is from this year that the hopeless corruption of the local municipal legislature dates. In 1857 the State Legislature at Albany began a long and active course of dabbling in our municipal matters—sometimes wisely and sometimes foolishly—by passing a charter which divided responsibility and power among the different local officers, and needlessly multiplied the latter by keeping up the fiction of separate governments for the county and city, which had really become identical. They also created local boards and commissions which were appointed by the State, not the city, authorities. This last act aroused intense hostility among the city politicians; especially was this the case in regard to the new Police Board. The city authorities wished at all costs to retain the power of appointing and ruling the police in their own hands; and they resisted by force of arms the introduction of the new system. Fernando Wood's old "municipal" police and the new State, or so-called "metropolitan" police fought for a couple of days in the streets, with considerable bloodshed. But the courts declared in favor of the constitutionality of the acts of the legislature, and the municipal authorities were forced to abandon their opposition.

Throughout this period New York's public and

private buildings were increasing in size and costliness as rapidly as in numbers. It is difficult to say as much for their beauty, as a whole. Nevertheless, some of them are decidedly handsome,—notably some of the churches, such as Trinity, and above all St. Patrick's, the cornerstone of which was laid in 1858. A really great piece of architectural engineering was the Croton aqueduct which was opened for use in 1842.

The city had also done something for that higher national development, the lack of which makes material prosperity simply a source of national vulgarization. She did her share in helping forward the struggling schools of American painters and sculptors; and she did more than her share in founding American literature. Sydney Smith's famous query, propounded in 1820, was quite justified by the facts. Nobody of the present day *does* read any American book which was then written, with two exceptions; and the witty Dean could scarcely be expected to have any knowledge of Irving's first purely local work, while probably hardly a soul in England had so much as heard of that really wonderful volume, "The Federalist." Both of these were New York books; and New York may fairly claim to have been the birthplace of American literature. Immediately after 1820 Washington Irving and Fenimore Cooper won world-wide fame; while Bryant was chief of a

group of poets which included men like Rodman Drake. For the first time we had a literature worthy of being so called, which was not saturated with the spirit of servile colonialism, the spirit of humble imitation of things European. Our political life became full and healthy only after we had achieved political independence; and it is quite as true that we never have done, and never shall do, anything really worth doing, whether in literature or art, except when working distinctively as Americans.

We are not yet free from the spirit of colonialism in art and letters; but the case was, and is, much worse with our purely social life,—or at least with that portion of it which ought to be, and asserts itself to be, but emphatically is not, our best social life. In the "Potiphar Papers," Mr. Curtis, a New Yorker of whom all New Yorkers can be proud, has left a description which can hardly be called a caricature of fashionable New York society as it was in the decade before the war. It is not an attractive picture. The city then contained nearly three-quarters of a million inhabitants, and the conditions of life were much as they are to-day. The era of railroads and steamships was well under way; all the political and social problems and evils which now exist, existed then, often in aggravated form. The mere commercial classes were absorbed in making money,—a pursuit

which of course becomes essentially ignoble when followed as an end and not as a means. It had become very easy to travel in Europe, and immense shoals of American tourists went thither every season, deriving but doubtful benefit from their tour. New York possessed a large wealthy class which did not quite know how to get most pleasure from its money, and which had not been trained, as all good citizens of the republic should be trained, to realize that in America every man of means and leisure must do some kind of work, whether in politics, in literature, in science, or in what, for lack of a better word, may be called philanthropy, if he wishes really to enjoy life, and to avoid being despised as a drone in the community. Moreover, they failed to grasp the infinite possibilities of enjoyment, of interest, and of usefulness, which American life offers to every man, rich or poor, if he have only heart and head. With singular poverty of imagination they proceeded on the assumption that to enjoy their wealth they must slavishly imitate the superficial features, and the defects rather than the merits, of the life of the wealthy classes of Europe, instead of borrowing only its best traits, and adapting even these to their own surroundings. They put wealth above everything else, and therefore hopelessly vulgarized their lives. The shoddy splendors of the second French Empire naturally

appealed to them, and so far as might be they imitated its ways. Dress, manners, amusements, —all were copied from Paris; and when they went to Europe, it was in Paris that they spent most of their time. To persons of intelligence and force their lives seemed equally dull at home and abroad. They took little interest in literature or politics; they did not care to explore and hunt and travel in their own country; they did not have the taste for athletic sport which is so often the one redeeming feature of the gilded youth of to-day, and which, if not very much when taken purely by itself, is at least something. Fashionable society was composed of two classes. There were, first, the people of good family,—those whose forefathers at some time had played their parts manfully in the world, and who claimed some shadowy superiority on the strength of this memory of the past, unbacked by any proof of merit in the present. Secondly, there were those who had just made money,—the father having usually merely the money-getting faculty, the presence of which does not necessarily imply the existence of any other worthy quality whatever, the rest of the family possessing only the absorbing desire to spend what the father had earned. In the summer they all went to Saratoga or to Europe; in winter they came back to New York. Fifth Avenue was becoming the fashionable street,

and on it they built their brownstone-front houses, all alike outside, and all furnished in the same style within,—heavy furniture, gilding, mirrors, glittering chandeliers. If a man was very rich he had a few feet more frontage, and more gilding, more mirrors, and more chandeliers. There was one incessant round of gaiety, but it possessed no variety whatever, and little interest.

Of course there were plenty of exceptions to all these rules. There were many charming houses, there was much pleasant social life, just as there were plenty of honest politicians; and there were multitudes of men and women well fitted to perform the grave duties and enjoy the great rewards of American life. But taken as a whole, the fashionable and political life of New York in the decade before the Civil War offers an instructive rather than an attractive spectacle.

CHAPTER XIV.

RECENT HISTORY. 1860-1890.

IN 1860 New York had over eight hundred thousand inhabitants. During the thirty years that have since passed, its population has nearly doubled. If the city limits were enlarged, like those of London and Chicago, so as to take in the suburbs, the population would amount to some three millions. Recently there has been a great territorial expansion northward, beyond the Haarlem, by the admission of what is known as the Annexed District. The growth of wealth has fully kept pace with the growth of population. The city is one of the two or three greatest commercial and manufacturing centers of the world.

The ten years between 1860 and 1870 form the worst decade in the city's political annals, although the somber picture is relieved by touches of splendid heroism, martial prowess, and civic devotion. At the outbreak of the Civil War the city was—as it has since continued to be—the stronghold of the Democratic party in the North; and unfortunately, during the Rebellion, while the Democratic party contained many of the loyal, it also contained all of the disloyal, elements. A Democratic victory at the polls, hardly, if at all,

less than a Confederate victory in the field, meant a Union defeat. A very large and possibly a controlling element in the city Democracy was at heart strongly disunion in sentiment, and showed the feeling whenever it dared.

At the outset of the Civil War there was even an effort made to force the city into active rebellion. The small local Democratic leaders, of the type of Isaiah Rynders, the brutal and turbulent ruffians who led the mob and controlled the politics of the lower wards, openly and defiantly threatened to make common cause with the South, and to forbid the passage of Union troops through the city. The mayor, Fernando Wood, in January, 1861, proclaimed disunion to be "a fixed fact" in a message to the Common Council, and proposed that New York should herself secede and become a free city, with but a nominal duty upon imports. The independent commonwealth was to be named "Tri-Insula," as being composed of three islands,—Long, Staten, and Manhattan. The Common Council, a corrupt body as disloyal as Wood himself, received the message enthusiastically, and had it printed and circulated wholesale.

But when Sumter was fired on the whole current changed like magic. There were many more good men than bad in New York; but they had been supine, or selfish, or indifferent, or undecided, and so the bad had had it all their own way. The

thunder of Sumter's guns waked the heart of the people to passionate loyalty. The bulk of the Democrats joined with the Republicans to show by word and act their fervent and patriotic devotion to the Union. Huge mass-meetings were held, and regiment after regiment was organized and sent to the front. Shifty Fernando Wood, true to his nature, went with the stream, and was loudest in proclaiming his horror of rebellion. The city, through all her best and bravest men, pledged her faithful and steadfast support to the government at Washington. The Seventh Regiment of the New York National Guards, by all odds the best regiment in the United States Militia, was the first in the whole country to go to the front and reach Washington, securing it against any sudden surprise.

The Union men of New York kept their pledge of loyalty in spirit and letter. Taking advantage of the intensity of the loyal excitement, they even elected a Republican mayor. The New Yorkers of means were those whose part was greatest in sustaining the nation's credit, while almost every high-spirited young man in the city went into the army. The city, from the beginning to the end of the war, sent her sons to the front by scores of thousands. Her troops alone would have formed a large army; and on a hundred battlefields, and throughout the harder trials of the long, dreary

campaigns, they bore themselves with high courage and stern, unyielding resolution. Those who by a hard lot were forced to stay at home busied themselves in caring for the men at the front, or for their widows and orphans; and the Sanitary Commission, the Allotment Commission, and other kindred organizations which did incalculable good, originated in New York.

Yet the very energy with which New York sent her citizen soldiery to the front, left her exposed to a terrible danger. Much of the low foreign element, as well as the worst among the native-born roughs, had been hostile to the war all along, and a ferocious outbreak was produced by the enforcement of the draft in July, 1863. The mob, mainly foreign, especially Irish, but reinforced by all the native rascality of the city, broke out for three days in what are known as the draft riots. They committed the most horrible outrages, their hostility being directed especially against the unfortunate negroes, many of whom they hung or beat to death with lingering cruelty; and they attacked various charitable institutions where negroes were cared for. They also showed their hatred to the national government and its defenders in every way, and even set out to burn down a hospital filled with wounded Union soldiers, besides mobbing all government officials. From attacking government property they speedily went to

assailing private property as well, burning and plundering the houses of rich and poor alike, and threatened to destroy the whole city in their anarchic fury,—the criminal classes, as always in such a movement, taking the control into their own hands. Many of the baser Democratic politicians, in order to curry favor with the mob, sought to prevent effective measures being taken against it; and even the Democratic governor, Seymour, an estimable man of high private character, but utterly unfit to grapple with the times that tried men's souls, took refuge in temporizing, half measures, and concessions. The Roman Catholic archbishop and priests opposed and denounced the rioters with greater or less boldness, according to their individual temperaments.

But the governing authorities, both national and municipal, acted with courage and energy. The American people are good-natured to the point of lax indifference; but once roused, they act with the most straightforward and practical resolution. Much fear had been expressed lest the large contingent of Irish among the police and State troops would be lukewarm or doubtful, but throughout the crisis they showed to the full as much courage and steadfast loyalty as their associates of native origin. One of the most deeply mourned victims of the mob was the gallant Colonel O'Brien of the Eleventh New York

Volunteers, who had dispersed a crowd of rioters with considerable slaughter, and was afterward caught by them when alone, and butchered under circumstances of foul and revolting brutality.

Most of the real working-men refused to join with the rioters, except when overawed and forced into their ranks; and many of them formed themselves into armed bodies, and assisted to restore order. The city was bare of troops, for they had all been sent to the front to face Lee at Gettysburg; and the police at first could not quell the mob. As regiment after regiment was hurried back to their assistance desperate street-fighting took place. The troops and police were thoroughly aroused, and attacked the rioters with the most wholesome desire to do them harm. In a very short time after the forces of order put forth their strength the outbreak was stamped out, and a lesson inflicted on the lawless and disorderly which they never entirely forgot. Two millions of property had been destroyed, and many valuable lives lost. But over twelve hundred rioters were slain, —an admirable object lesson to the remainder.

It was several years before the next riot occurred. This was of a race or religious character. The different nationalities in New York are in the habit of parading on certain days,—a particularly senseless and objectionable custom. The Orangemen on this occasion paraded on the anniversary

of the Battle of the Boyne, with the usual array of flags and banners, covered with mottoes especially insulting to the Celtic Irish; the latter threatened to stop the procession, and made the attempt; but the militia had been called out, and after a moment's sharp fighting, in which three of their number and seventy or eighty rioters were slain, the mob was scattered to the four winds. For the last twenty years no serious riots have occurred, and no mob has assembled which the police could not handle without the assistance of the State troops. The outbreaks that have taken place have almost invariably been caused by strikes or other labor troubles. Yet the general order and peacefulness should not blind us to the fact that there exists ever in our midst a slumbering "volcano under the city," as under all other large cities of the civilized world. This danger must continue to exist as long as our rich men look at life from a standpoint of silly frivolity, or else pursue a commercial career in a spirit of ferocious greed and disregard of justice, while the poor feel with sullen anger the pressure of many evils,—some of their own making, and some not,—and are far more sensible of the wrongs they suffer than of the folly of trying to right them under the lead of ignorant visionaries or criminal demagogues.

For several years after the war there was a perfect witches' Sabbath of political corruption

in New York City, which culminated during the mayoralty of Oakey Hall, who was elected in 1869. The Democratic party had absolute control of the municipal government; and this meant that the city was at the mercy of the ring of utterly unscrupulous and brutal politicians who then controlled that party, and who in time of need had friends among some of their so-called Republican opponents on whom they could always rely. Repeating, ballot-box stuffing, fraudulent voting and counting of votes, and every kind of violence and intimidation at the polls turned the elections into criminal farces. The majorities by which the city was carried for the Democratic presidential candidate Seymour in 1868, represented the worst electoral frauds which the country ever witnessed, —far surpassing even those by which Polk had been elected over Clay.

This was also the era of gigantic stock-swindling. The enormously rich stock-speculators of Wall Street in their wars with one another and against the general public, found ready tools and allies to be hired for money in the State and city politicians, and in judges who were acceptable alike to speculators, politicians, and mob. There were continual contests for the control of railway systems, and "operations" in stocks which barely missed being criminal, and which branded those who took part in them as infamous in the sight of

all honest men; and the courts and legislative bodies became parties to the iniquity of men composing that most dangerous of all classes, the wealthy criminal class.

Matters reached their climax in the feats of the "Tweed Ring." William M. Tweed was the master spirit among the politicians of his own party, and also secured a hold on a number of the local Republican leaders of the baser sort. He was a coarse, jovial, able man, utterly without scruple of any kind; and he organized all of his political allies and adherents into a gigantic "ring" to plunder the city. Incredible sums of money were stolen, especially in the construction of the new Court House. When the frauds were discovered, Tweed, secure in his power, asked in words that have become proverbial, "What are you going to do about it?" But the end came in 1871. Then the decent citizens, irrespective of party, banded together, urged on by the newspapers, especially the *Times* and *Harper's Weekly*,—for the city press deserves the chief credit for the defeat of Tweed. At the fall elections the ring candidates were overwhelmingly defeated; and the chief malefactors were afterward prosecuted, and many of them imprisoned, Tweed himself dying in a felon's cell. The offending judges were impeached, or resigned in time to escape impeachment.

For the last twenty years our politics have been better and purer, though with plenty of corruption and jobbery left still. There are shoals of base, ignorant, vicious "heelers" and "ward workers," who form a solid, well-disciplined army of evil, led on by abler men whose very ability renders them dangerous. Some of these leaders are personally corrupt; others are not, but do almost as much harm as if they were, because they divorce political from private morality. As a prominent politician recently phrased it, they believe that "the purification of politics is an iridescent dream; the decalogue and the golden rule have no place in a political campaign." The cynicism, no less silly than vicious, with which such men regard political life is repaid by the contemptuous anger with which they themselves are regarded by all men who are proud of their country and wish her well.

If the citizens can be thoroughly waked up, and a plain, naked issue of right and wrong presented to them, they can always be trusted. The trouble is that in ordinary times the self-seeking political mercenaries are the only persons who both keep alert and understand the situation; and they commonly reap their reward. The mass of vicious and ignorant voters—especially among those of foreign origin—forms a trenchant weapon forged ready to their hand, and presents a standing menace

to our prosperity; and the selfish and short-sighted indifference of decent men is only one degree less dangerous. Yet of recent years there has been among men of character and good standing a steady growth of interest in, and of a feeling of responsibility for, our politics. This otherwise most healthy growth has been at times much hampered and warped by the political ignorance and bad judgment of the leaders in the movement. Too often the educated men who without having had any practical training as politicians yet turn their attention to politics, are and remain utterly ignorant of the real workings of our governmental system, and in their attitude toward our public men oscillate between excessive credulity concerning their idol of the moment and jealous, ignorant prejudice against those with whom they temporarily disagree. They forget, moreover, that the man who really counts in the world is the doer, not the mere critic,—the man who actually does the work, even if roughly and imperfectly, not the man who only talks or writes about how it ought to be done.

Neither the unintelligent and rancorous partisan, nor the unintelligent and rancorous independent, is a desirable member of the body politic; and it is unfortunately true of each of them that he seems to regard with special and sour hatred, not the bad man, but the good man with whom he

politically differs. Above all, every young man should realize that it is a disgrace to him not to take active part in some way in the work of governing the city. Whoever fails to do this, fails notably in his duty to the Commonwealth.

The character of the immigration to the city is changing. The Irish, who in 1860 formed three-fifths of the foreign-born population, have come in steadily lessening numbers, until the Germans stand well at the head; while increasing multitudes of Italians, Poles, Bohemians, Russian Jews, and Hungarians—both Sclaves and Magyars—continually arrive. The English and Scandinavian elements among the immigrants have likewise increased. At the present time four-fifths of New York's population are of foreign birth or parentage; and among them there has been as yet but little race intermixture, though the rising generation is as a whole well on the way to complete Americanization. Certainly hardly a tenth of the people are of old Revolutionary American stock. The Catholic Church has continued to grow at a rate faster than the general rate of increase. The Episcopalian and Lutheran are the only Protestant churches whereof the growth has kept pace with that of the population.

The material prosperity of the city has increased steadily. There has been a marked improvement in architecture; and one really great engineering

work, the bridge across the East River, was completed in 1883. The stately and beautiful Riverside Drive, skirting the Hudson, along the hills which front the river, from the middle of the island northward, is well worth mention. It is one of the most striking roads or streets of which any city can boast, and the handsome houses that are springing up along it bid fair to make the neighborhood the most attractive portion of New York. Another attractive feature of the city is Central Park, while many other parks are being planned and laid out beyond where the town has as yet been built up. There are large numbers of handsome social clubs, such as the Knickerbocker, Union, and University, and many others of a politico-social character,—the most noted of them, alike for its architecture, political influence, and its important past history, being the Union League Club.

There are many public buildings which are extremely interesting as showing the growth of a proper civic spirit, and of a desire for a life with higher possibilities than money-making. There has been an enormous increase in the number of hospitals, many of them admirably equipped and managed; and the numerous Newsboys' Lodging Houses, Night Schools, Working-Girls' Clubs and the like, bear witness to the fact that many New Yorkers who have at their disposal time or money

are alive to their responsibilities, and are actively striving to help their less fortunate fellows to help themselves. The Cooper Union building, a gift to the city for the use of all its citizens, in the widest sense, keeps alive the memory of old Peter Cooper, a man whose broad generosity and simple kindliness of character, while not rendering him fit for the public life into which he at times sought entrance, yet inspired in New Yorkers of every class a genuine regard such as they felt for no other philanthropist. Indeed, uncharitableness and lack of generosity have never been New York failings; the citizens are keenly sensible to any real, tangible distress or need. A blizzard in Dakota, an earthquake in South Carolina, a flood in Pennsylvania,—after any such catastrophe hundreds of thousands of dollars are raised in New York at a day's notice, for the relief of the sufferers; while, on the other hand, it is a difficult matter to raise money for a monument or a work of art.

It is necessary both to appeal to the practical business sense of the citizens and to stir the real earnestness and love of country which lie underneath the somewhat coarse-grained and not always attractive surface of the community, in order to make it show its real strength. Thus, there is no doubt that in case of any important foreign war or domestic disturbance New York would back

up the general government with men and money to a practically unlimited extent. For all its motley population, there is a most wholesome underlying spirit of patriotism in the city, if it can only be roused. Few will question this who saw the great processions on land and water, and the other ceremonies attendant upon the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Federal Constitution. The vast crowds which thronged the streets were good-humored and orderly to a degree, and were evidently interested in much more than the mere spectacular part of the celebration. They showed by every action their feeling that it was indeed peculiarly *their* celebration; for it commemorated the hundred years' duration of a government which, with many shortcomings, had nevertheless secured order and enforced law, and yet was emphatically a government of the people, giving to the workingman a chance which he has never had elsewhere. In all the poorer quarters of the city, where the population was overwhelmingly of foreign birth or origin, the national flag, the stars and stripes, hung from every window, and the picture of Washington was displayed wherever there was room. Flag and portrait alike were tokens that those who had come to our shores already felt due reverence and love for the grand memory of the man who, more than any other, laid the

foundation of our government; and that they already challenged as their own American nationality and American life, glorying in the Nation's past and confident in its future.

In science and art, in musical and literary development, much remains to be wished for; yet something has already been done. The building of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, of the American Museum of Natural History, of the Metropolitan Opera House, the gradual change of Columbia College into a University,—all show a development which tends to make the city more and more attractive to people of culture; and the growth of literary and dramatic clubs, such as the Century and the Players, is scarcely less significant. The illustrated monthly magazines — the *Century*, *Scribner's*, and *Harper's*—occupy an entirely original position of a very high order in periodical literature. The greatest piece of literary work which has been done in America, or indeed anywhere, of recent years, was done by a citizen of New York,—not a professed man of letters, but a great General, an ex-President of the United States, writing his memoirs on his death-bed, to save his family from want. General Grant's book has had an extraordinary sale among the people at large, though even yet hardly appreciated at its proper worth by the critics; and it is scarcely too high praise to say that, both because of the

intrinsic worth of the matter, and because of its strength and simplicity as a piece of literary work, it almost deserves to rank with the speeches and writings of Abraham Lincoln.

The fact that General Grant toward the end of his life made New York his abode,—as General Sherman has since done,—illustrates what is now a well-marked tendency of prominent men throughout the country to come to this city to live. There is no such leaning toward centralization, socially or politically, in the United States as in most European countries, and no one of our cities will ever assume toward the others a position similar to that held in their own countries by London, Paris, Vienna, or Berlin. There are in the United States ten or a dozen cities each of which stands as the social and commercial, though rarely as the political, capital of a district as large as an average European kingdom. No one of them occupies a merely provincial position as compared with any other; while the political capital of the country, the beautiful city of Washington, stands apart with a most attractive and unique life of its own. There is thus no chance for New York to take an unquestioned leadership in all respects. Nevertheless, its life is so intense and so varied, and so full of manifold possibilities, that it has a special and peculiar fascination for ambitious and high-spirited men of every kind, whether they wish

to enjoy the fruits of past toil, or whether they have yet their fortunes to make, and feel confident that they can swim in troubled waters,—for weaklings have small chance of forging to the front against the turbulent tide of our city life. The truth is that every man worth his salt has open to him in New York a career of boundless usefulness and interest.

As for the upper social world, the fashionable world, it is much as it was when portrayed in the "Potiphar Papers," save that modern society has shifted the shrine at which it pays comical but sincere homage from Paris to London. Perhaps it is rather better, for it is less provincial and a trifle more American. But a would-be upper class based mainly on wealth, in which it is the exception and not the rule for a man to be of any real account in the national life, whether as a politician, a literary man, or otherwise, is of necessity radically defective and of little moment.

Grim dangers confront us in the future, yet there is more ground to believe that we shall succeed than that we shall fail in overcoming them. Taking into account the enormous mass of immigrants, utterly unused to self-government of any kind, who have been thrust into our midst, and are even yet not assimilated, the wonder is not that universal suffrage has worked so badly, but that it has worked so well. We are better, not worse off,

than we were a generation ago. There is much gross civic corruption and commercial and social selfishness and immorality, upon which we are in honor bound to wage active and relentless war. But honesty and moral cleanliness are the rule; and under the laws order is well preserved, and all men are kept secure in the possession of life, liberty, and property. The sons and grandsons of the immigrants of fifty years back have as a whole become good Americans, and have prospered wonderfully, both as regards their moral and material well-being. There is no reason to suppose that the condition of the working classes as a whole has grown worse, though there are enormous bodies of them whose condition is certainly very bad. There are grave social dangers and evils to meet, but there are plenty of earnest men and women who devote their minds and energies to meeting them. With many very serious shortcomings and defects, the average New Yorker yet possesses courage, energy, business capacity, much generosity of a practical sort, and shrewd, humorous common sense. The greedy tyranny of the unscrupulous rich and the anarchic violence of the vicious and ignorant poor are ever threatening dangers; but though there is every reason why we should realize the gravity of the perils ahead of us, there is none why we should not face them with confident and resolute hope, if only each of

us, according to the measure of his capacity, will with manly honesty and good faith do his full share of the all-important duties incident to American citizenship.

POSTSCRIPT.

DURING the five years that have passed since I wrote this book, there has occurred in New York a political revolution so noteworthy that it may be well briefly to tell of its principal features. It was barely second in importance to the revolution which resulted in the overthrow of the Tweed ring.

Ever since the days of Tweed, Tammany Hall has, with the exception of a few brief periods, been the controlling force in the New York City Democracy, and has generally held the reins of government in the city itself. There have been honorable men in Tammany, and there have been occasions on which Tammany has acted well and has deserved well of the country; nevertheless, speaking broadly, it may be said that Tammany has always stood for what was worst in our political life, and especially in our municipal politics. The Tammany Hall organization is a machine of ideal perfection for its own purposes. It has as leaders a number of men of great ability in certain special directions. The rank and file of its members are recruited from the most ignorant portion of the city's population, coming from among the voters who can usually be voted in a mass by

those who have influence over them. This influence is sometimes obtained by appeals to their prejudices and by the lowest art of the demagogue; sometimes it is obtained by downright corruption, sometimes it is obtained through the influence the local Tammany organizations exert on the social life of their neighborhoods. The District leaders are able in a hundred ways to benefit their followers. They try to get them work when they are idle; they provide amusement for them in the shape of picnics and steamboat excursions; and, in exceptional cases, they care for them when suffering from want or sickness; and they are always ready to help them when they have fallen into trouble with the representatives of the law. They thus get a very strong influence over a large class, the members of which are ordinarily fairly decent men, who work with reasonable industry at their trades, but who never get far ahead, who at times fall into want, and who sometimes have kinsfolk of semi-criminal type. These men are apt to regard the saloon as their club-house; often, indeed, the saloons are the headquarters of the District political organizations, and become in a double sense the true social centers of neighborhood life.

To the mass of citizens of this kind the local political leaders are not merely individuals of whose public actions they approve or disapprove

as mere disinterested outside critics. On the contrary, these leaders are men with whose welfare their own is often intimately bound; men who can, and do, render them important services, both proper and improper, on occasions when they are in need. It is impossible ever to understand the power of the political machines in New York City life until the importance of their social side is fully grasped. Their social functions, the part they play in the everyday life of the people, constitute the chief reason for their overwhelming predominance in the political field.

The saloons form on the whole the most potent factor in the political life of those Districts where the population is the most congested, where the people are poorest and most ignorant, and where the evils of machine domination are most acutely felt. In consequence, the saloon-keeper is, nine times out of ten, a more or less influential politician. In Tammany Hall a very large proportion of the leaders are, or have been, saloon-keepers. The saloon-keeper is usually a comparatively rich man, at least in the eyes of most of the people with whom he is thrown in contact. He is brought into intimate connection with a large number of voters, and he has rooms which they find offer the best accommodations for club purposes. He is thus able to get much influence which he can either use as a politician himself, or can wield in the

interest of other politicians. On the other hand, his is a business which always tempts to law-breaking. New York City receives its law from New York State. Country Districts are always favorable to temperance legislation. New York contains a very large element which objects to any regulation of the sale of liquor, and which continually wishes to drink at hours when drinking is prohibited by law. New York State, for instance, has always insisted that the saloons everywhere, including those in New York City, should be closed on Sundays; but in New York City there has been always a very large number of people who wanted the saloons open, and there has generally been entire readiness on the part of the city officials that the saloons should stay open in defiance of the law, so long as they paid for the privilege, and did not antagonize the authorities in some question of moment. In consequence, the saloon-keeper, who did his most thriving trade on Sunday, stood in urgent need of the protection which could be granted by the local politician. Accordingly, every saloon-keeper could, on the one hand, be most useful to the local political leaders, and, on the other hand, needed the services of the local political leaders. The consequence was a very close connection between the saloon-keeper and the politician. A further consequence was that the saloons became one of the

chief elements in bringing about the gross political corruption of New York.

The politics, both of New York City and of New York State, continually suffer kaleidoscope changes. Told in detail, their political history is but the unraveling of a tangle of faction fights and intrigues. If, however, we disregard the names of these factions, we can readily get a clear glimpse of the forces at work in New York. Within the Democratic party, Tammany has ordinarily dominated, but the anti-Tammany Democrats are continually joining into an organization, or organizations, which are always of ephemeral existence, but which sometimes accomplish a great deal during their short lease of life. The Republicans include normally rather over two-fifths of the voters of the city. There is among them a corrupt element which is often delighted to make a deal with Tammany, accepting a few offices in consideration of securing Tammany's control over the remainder.

Of late years, a strong feeling has grown among honest and self-respecting men that in municipal matters there should not be a division along the lines of cleavage between the National parties. For years the great effort of New York municipal reformers has been to combine good citizens against Tammany. The Republican machine has sometimes helped, and sometimes hindered these

efforts, and the same has been true of the various Democratic anti-Tammany organizations. At the elections Tammany always runs a ticket. Sometimes it receives the solid support of the entire Democracy. More rarely it makes a virtue of necessity and indorses a decent ticket nominated by other Democrats. Sometimes it fights for its own hand against both an anti-Tammany Democratic ticket and a Republican ticket. Sometimes its nominee for mayor is opposed by an anti-Tammany man, whether Republican or Democrat, supported by a coalition of all the anti-Tammany forces. The elements opposed to Tammany are so incongruous, and there is so much jealousy among them, that it is very difficult to bring them into any permanent combination. Still, whenever an anti-Tammany Democrat has been elected to office, it has always been through the powerful element of Republican voters, whether the help was given through the Republican machine or against its wishes. In return, a certain proportion of the anti-Tammany Democratic vote has always been willing to support a Republican candidate against Tammany.

From the defeat of Tweed up to 1888, Tammany, though dominant in New York City politics, always held a divided sway. In 1888, however, it obtained absolute power. A Tammany mayor was elected by an enormous plurality,

the Republican candidate standing second, and the anti-Tammany Democrat third. The governorship and the State legislature were both in the hands of Tammany's most faithful Democratic allies. The chief power in the city government is lodged in the hands of the mayor; and when he is backed by the governor and legislature his powers are almost dictatorial. In 1890, the Republicans supported the anti-Tammany nominee for mayor. This was the year of the Democratic tidal-wave, and the Tammany candidate won by a large majority. In 1892, the anti-Tammany Democrats surrendered to Tammany and supported its nominee, who beat the Republican candidate with the greatest ease. During all these years corruption grew apace in the city government. The Tammany officials had put their foes under their feet, and no longer feared resistance or criticism. They did not believe it would be possible to overturn them. They did whatever was right in their own eyes; and what was right in their eyes was generally very wrong indeed in the eyes of men who believed in the elementary principles of honesty. When, with the Presidential election of 1892, the Republican party went out of power in city, State, and nation alike, while Tammany was left supreme and unopposed in the city and State Democracy, the Tammany leaders threw off the last bonds of restraint, and acted with contemptuous

defiance of decent public opinion. Corruption and blackmail grew apace, and the dominant note in the Tammany organization was a cynical contempt of decent public opinion. This brought about its own punishment. The abuses in many of the departments, notably in the police force and among the city magistrates, became so gross as to shock even men of callous conscience. The public indignation was latent, but it existed, ready to take effective shape if only the right man arose to direct its manifestation.

The man was found in the person of a Presbyterian clergyman, the Rev. Charles W. Parkhurst. Single-handed, he began a crusade against the gross political corruption of the city government. He made his fight entirely outside of political lines, or perhaps it would be more fair to say that he made it without regard to national politics, attacking the city officials simply as malefactors, and urging a union of all decent men against them. At first he was rewarded merely by ridicule and abuse; but he never flinched for a moment, and decent sentiment began to crystallize in his support. Moreover, the blunders of the Democratic party in State and national affairs helped the reformers, precisely as the shortcomings of the Republicans had helped Tammany in 1890 and 1892. In 1893, the State Democracy, under the lead of Senator Hill, Tammany's stanch ally,

nominated for judge a man who had been disagreeably implicated in election frauds. Even men of low political morality dislike a tainted judiciary, and this nomination shocked many men who never before had bolted the Democratic ticket. The Bar of the State, and especially the Bar of the city, was nearly unanimous in denunciation of the nomination. Tammany and its allies put forth every effort to overcome this hostile sentiment. Not since the days of Seymour's candidacy for President was the cheating so open and scandalous in New York City. In other places, notably at Coney Island, it was quite as flagrant. Nevertheless, the obnoxious candidate was defeated by one hundred thousand votes, and a Republican legislature was elected.

The result of the election was like an electric shock to the whole reform movement. But a year before it had seemed hopeless to awaken the conscience of decent citizens, and still more hopeless to expect to punish a wrong-doer. Now all was changed. The men most conspicuous in the electoral frauds were vigorously prosecuted, and some forty of them were sent to prison for longer or shorter periods. A Legislative Committee started to investigate the condition of municipal affairs in New York; and before this committee it was shown that Dr. Parkhurst's accusations were true, and that the system of blackmailing

and corruption by the Tammany Hall officials and notably by the Police Department, was as appalling as he had insisted. In the fall of 1894, the decent men of the city joined together, and nominated a union ticket, with, at its head, as candidate for mayor, William A. Strong, a Republican. Helped by the general Republican tidal-wave, which in the State secured the defeat of Senator Hill for governor by one hundred and fifty thousand plurality, Strong and the rest of the ticket were elected in New York City, the Tammany ticket being defeated by a sweeping majority.

There followed a complete revolution in the municipal government. The victory had been won, not on party lines, but as a fight for decent government, and for the non-partisan administration of municipal affairs. Democrat and Republican, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, the man born of native American stock and the man whose parents came from Ireland or Germany, all had joined in achieving the victory. The change in the city departments was radical. It was not so much a change in policy as a change of administration. It is rather humiliating for a New Yorker to have to confess that this revolutionary change consisted simply in applying the standard of common decency and common honesty to our public affairs. Under the old

administration of the departments corruption had been so rife that it may almost be said to have been the rule. With the new dispensation there came an era of strict honesty.

The improvement has been so great that it may fairly be called wonderful. Whether or not it will be permanent is difficult to foretell. I think that those are oversanguine who believe that there will be no falling back. On the other hand, I do not believe that there will be any permanent or complete return to the old conditions, and I do not feel that good citizens should grow downhearted over a momentary check or reaction. Tammany Hall may come back, but it will be a chastened Tammany Hall. The wrong-doing will not be as flagrant as formerly, and it will be easier to arouse a revolt against the wrong-doers.

That there will be some reaction is only to be expected; and it may be questioned whether, in a city with as composite a population as New York, where the bulk of the voters have for so many years been accustomed to the worst kind of machine rule, it will be possible very long to maintain the standard quite as high as it is at present. It iseasier to rally the varying elements when in opposition, than to get them to support an administration which is actually engaged in the solution of important problems. Nevertheless, be the immediate outcome what it may, great and

lasting good has been done; for New York has been shown that it is possible to obtain a decent and clean administration of municipal affairs, free from the curse of spoils politics, and above all the city at last knows, by practical experience, the immense moral, no less than material, gain which arises from giving the control of civic matters to men who are fearless and disinterested, and who combine the virtues of honesty and common sense.

INDEX

Acadia, 3
Adventure, an age of, 1, 2
Advisory Council, Minuit's, 17; Stuyvesant's, 36
Africa, early trade with, 90
Albany, Hudson's arrival near site of, 8; establishment of post near site, 11; refuses allegiance to Leisler's rule, 83; trade with, 90
Aldermen, first, 50; office abolished, 55; elected by freeholders, 67; disorderly election for, 103; "rights" of, 177; how elected after Revolution, 178; a local legislature, 178
Algonquins, massacre of, 27; reasons for their defeats, 29
Allotment Commission, the, 248
America, Spanish possessions in, 2, 3; uncertain ownership in early times, 3
American Fur Company, 218
American Museum of Natural History, 260
Amusements, of early settlers, 39, 115; at beginning of nineteenth century, 203, 204
Anarchy, threatened, 30
Andros, Sir Edmund, appointed governor, 58; reinstates English form of government, 58; makes English the official language, 59; character of his rule, 60; grants monopoly of bolting and exporting flour, 60; abolishes Indian slavery, 61; hostility to Puritans, 61; summoned to England, 62; restored to favor, 62; reappointed, 69; imprisonment of, 70; consequences of fall of, 73
Annexed District, the, 245
Anti-Monopolist party, 236
Architecture, 240, 257
Aristocratic element, 17, 49, 114 and note
Aristocratic party, in 1689, 74; supported by Fletcher, 97, 98; trial of leaders for treason, 103
Armorial bearings, 115
Art, encouragement of, 240
Assembly, the, constitution of, 66; early acts of, 66; property qualification for election to, 87; struggles in, 88, 89; Fletcher's interference with elections for, 96, 97; characteristics of, 98; quarrels with Fletcher, 99; parsimony as regards defenses, 99, 128, 129; condemns Roman Catholic priests to death, 105; issues paper money, 107; minority of popular party in, 142; set aside, and replaced by Provincial Congress, 156

Astor, John Jacob, 217, 219
Astor Library, 218
Astor Place Riots, 233, 234
Asylums, 206
Australia, owes practical independence to United States, 131

Backwoodsman, evolution of the, 24
Bakery, the first, 18
Ballston Springs, 204
Bankruptcy of States, 180
Banks, chartering of, 201
Baptists, refuge for, 26; persecuted by Stuyvesant, 42; strength before the Revolution and at present day, 109
Battery Park, 204
Bayard, Col. Nicholas, leader of aristocratic party in 1689, 74; colonel of trainbands, 75; chased from the city, 82
Bayard House, feast at, 185
Beekman, David, 128, note
Beekman, William, 128, note
Bellomont, Earl of, succeeds Gov. Fletcher, 99; character, 99, 100; favors Leislerians and popular party, 100; honors bodies of Leisler and Milborne, 100; connection with Capt. Kidd, 101; land policy of, 102; death, 103
Berrian, John, 156, note
Bigotry, 70
Billeting Act, opposition to, 142, 143
Binckes, Adm., takes the city, 54
Blackball Line of packets, 221
Block, Adrian, loses vessel by fire, 8; builds first ship in American waters, 9
Blockade of city, 209
Bogardus, Dominie, 20, 27
Bohemian immigration, 256
Bond servants, 118, 119
Boston, Mass., mail between New York and, 54; compared with New York in 1710, 108; sentiment and action about Tea Act, 146; New York refuses aid to British garrison at, 154
Boston Massacre, not first bloodshed in Revolution, 145
Boueries, 18
Bowling Green, Stamp Act riots on, 140
Brazil, despoiled by the West India Company, 13
Bread riots, 234
Breda, Peace of, 51
Brewery, the first, 18
Bribery, early, 100; Gov. Cornbury influenced by, 104; in street railway cases, 239
British fleet, New York the base of operations of, 161; action on the Hudson, 165
British occupation, 166, 272
British troops, New York the base of operations of, 161; make New York their headquarters, 166; treatment of captured city, 167
Brockholls, Anthony, Lt.-Gov., in charge of colony, 62; inefficiency, 62
Brooklyn, L. I., Revolutionary forces at, 161
Brown, Charles Brockden, 208
Bryant, William Cullen, 240
Burgomasters, abolition of, 49; office restored, 55
Burr, Aaron, in retreat at Kip's Bay, 164; a resident

of New York, 181; power in city democracy, 189; elected senator, 189; disliked by Hamilton, 189; defeat in 1799, 189; candidate for Vice-Presidency, 191; tactics in election of 1800, 191; elected Vice-President, 192; tie vote in Electoral College, 193; antagonism of Jefferson to, 197; driven out of Democratic party, 198; candidate for governorship, 198; kills Hamilton in duel, 199; ostracized, 199; bill to introduce water into the city, 201

Canada, futile expedition against, 83, 84; effect of English conquest of, on American history, 126, 132
Canal Street, site of, 14; origin of name, 37
Capital, New York the Federal, 185
Catskill Mountains, 8
Centennial celebration of adoption of Federal Constitution, 259
Central Park, 257
Century Club, 260
"Century Magazine," the, 260
Charities, 206, 257
Charles II., death of, 68
Charter of 1857, 239
Charter of Liberties and Privileges, 66
Chatham, Earl of, possibilities in his statesmanship, 137
China trade, 175
Cholera, plague of 1832, 232
Christiansen, Hendrik, head of Dutch posts, 9; death of, 10
Christmas, observance of, 116
Church, the first, 19, 38
Churches, turned into prisons, 167, 168; repair of, 173
Church of England, the State church, 87, 111; the fashionable organization, 112; controls King's College, 112; enmity to, 153; *see* also EPISCOPALIAN
Citizenship, early admission of foreigners to, 47, 66
City Council, dispersed by Leisler's troops, 78, 82
City Hall, headquarters of Lt.-Gov. Ingoldsby, 86; used as prison, 170
Civil rights, guaranteed by Gov. Nicolls, 47
Civil War, early threats of, 180; New York during the, 245
Class divisions, 202
Class government, 87
Clergy, action of Roman Catholic, during draft riots, 249
Clergyman, the first regular, 20
Clinton, De Witt, first scholar of Columbia College, 173; rise of, 189; member of Council of Appointment, 193; principles of appointment to office, 196; mayor, 197; fights a duel, 199; constructs Erie Canal, 215; introduces spoils system, 215
Clinton, Gen. George, opposes evacuation of New York, 162; character, 163, 182; opposes union of States, 182; election frauds in interest of, 187; management of patronage, 188,

196; elected governor, 193, elected Vice-President, 198
Clinton family, leaders of Democracy, 191; distrust of Burr, 191; apportionment of patronage among, 197; opposition to Burr, 197
Clipper ships, 220
Clubs, 52, 257
Coast trade, 90
Cod-fisheries, 53
Coffee-houses, 118
Colden, Gov. Cadwallader, attempts to enforce Stamp Act, 139; hung in effigy, 140; burned in effigy, 140; yields custody of stamps to municipal authorities, 141
Colonial families, descent of prominent, 87, note
Colonialism, spirit of, 241
Colonial system, vice of, 15, 126
Colonies, Congress of, 83; English restrictions on trade of, 98; Tory and neutral element in, 150
Colonists, first, 13; love of liberty among English, 127; home tie of, a drawback, 133; feeling of, on their reputed inferiority, 152
Colonization, European theory of, 127; change in that theory, 131
Columbia College (*see* also KING'S COLLEGE), name of King's College changed to, 173; development into a university, 260
Columbia Gardens, 204
Colve, Capt. Anthony, receives surrender of city, 55; character, 56; troubles with Long Island Puritans, 56; establishes military law, 57; imposes heavy taxes, 57; succeeded by Sir Edmund Andros, 58
Commerce, influence of, 9; blow to, by war between Holland and England, 54; early, 90; restrictions on, 98; increase of, 175, 245
Commercial honor, low tone of, 180
Committee of Fifty-one, 147, 148
Committee of Mechanics, 147
Committee of Safety, 82
Committee of Sixty, 148
Committee of Vigilance, 147
Common, the, 116; Stamp Act rioting on, 140
Common Council, disloyalty of, 246
Connecticut, joins expedition against Canada, 83
Connecticut River, Van Twiller's fort on, 21
Connecticut Valley, English take possession of, 21, 26
Constables, election of, 178
Constitution of New York, abolishes religious disabilities, 174; character of framers, 176; adoption of a new, 210, 213
Constitution of United States, adoption of, 180; position of Hamilton in regard to, 183; procession in honor of, 184, 185; centennial celebration of adoption of, 259
Continental Army, motley character of, 156
Continental Congress, first idea of holding, 147; the first and second, 149
Convicts, early importations of, 118, 119

Cooper, James Fenimore, 240
Cooper, Peter, 258
Cooper Union, 258
Cornbury, Lord Edward H., appointed governor, 104; character, 105; misappropriates public funds, 105; removal of, 105.
Corruption, political, 251, 263
Cosby, Gov. William, character, 123; libeled by Zenger, 124
Costume, of early Dutch settlers, 39; in colonial period, 95; at beginning of nineteenth century, 203
Council of Appointment, 175, 176; power of, 196; abolition of, 213
Council of Twelve, Kieft's, 29
Court house, frauds in construction of, 233
Court party, known as Tories, 125; Episcopalians and Dutch in, 136; great families the leaders in, 136; revival of, 142
Criminal classes, large proportion of, among early settlers, 35
Croton aqueduct, 240
Crow's Nest, 8
Curtis, George W., author of "Potiphar Papers," 241
Customs duties, refusal to pay, 62

Declaration of Independence, supported by best citizens, 156
Declaration of Rights by Stamp Act Congress, 138
Defenses, inferiority of, 156, 157
De Lancey, James, appointed chief-justice, 124; conduct in trial of Zenger, 124
De Lancey family, armorial bearings of, 115; leaders of court party, 125, 136, 142
Delaware River, Swedish possessions on, 3; Dutch colony on, 21; Swedish colony defeated by Stuyvesant, 40; extinction of Swedish Lutheran Church, on, 111
Demagogism, 179
Democracy, tendencies of Dutch settlers toward, 41; early limitations of, 88; rise against the oligarchy, 135; early opinions about, 176; absolute sway of, 200
Democratic party, rise of name, 186; control State and city, 193; merciless use of patronage, 197; support the French, 200; split in, 236; controlled by Tammany Hall, 237; power of, 245; corruption in, 252
De Peyster family, leaders in the court party, 136
Detroit, wrested from the French, 5
De Vries, patroon, 25, 27
Disorders, after fall of Andros, 73; after Bellomont's death, 103
Doctors' Mob, the, 174
Dominie, first house for the, 19
Dongan, Thomas, appointed governor, 64; policy and character, 64, 68; recalled, 69
Draft riots, 248, 250
Drake, Rodman, 240
Drinking habits, early colonial, 115
Duane, James, first mayor after Revolution, 178
Duels, 190

Dutch, settlements in America, 3, 4; defeated by Plymouth colonists, 21; characteristics of, 23, 24; massacre by Indians, 28; religious liberty under English rule, 47, 50; recapture of city by, 54
Dutch Church, rights guaranteed to, 87; extinction prevented, 111
Dutch rule, transition to English, 46; restoration of, 54; end of, 57.

East Indies, early trade with, 90
East River bridge, 257
Education, in early colonial times, 116; foundation of free-school system, 206
Election riots, 234
Elections, intimidation at, 97; disorderly aldermanic, 103; frauds at, 252
Electoral College, tie-vote for Jefferson and Burr, 193
Electric telegraph, development of, 216
Eleventh New York Volunteers, 249
Embargo, the, 201
England, the cradle of seamen, 1; immigration from, 26, 256; seizes New Amsterdam, 43, 45; war with Holland, 51, 54; early trade with, 90; treatment of colonies compared with other nations, 126; how colonies might have been preserved, 132, 133
English, settlements in America, 3; early settlers, 14, 34; Minuit's relations with, 18; Van Twiller's relations with, 20; immigration of, 26, 256; early settlers belong to aristocratic party, 48; regain possession of New York, 57; *see* also BRITISH
English law, supremacy of, in New York, 5
English rule, transition from Dutch to, 46; overthrown by the Dutch, 54, 55; restored, 57
English-speaking race, marvelous spread of, 127
Episcopalian Church, the fashionable organization, 112; growth of, 256; *see* also CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Episcopalian churches, closed for fear of mobs, 154; reopened during British occupation, 168
Episcopalians, detestation of Leisler, 80; persecutions of Presbyterians by, 110, 112
Equality, necessity of, in the Federal Union, 133
Equal Rights Men, 236
Erie Canal, effect on city, 215
Evacuation, by Washington's troops, 162; by British troops, 171
Evertsen, Adm. Cornelis, takes the city, 54; makes Colve director of the province, 55
Exchange, foundation of the, 53
Execution Dock, Captain Kidd hung at, 102
Explorers, an age of, 1, 2

Farming, advance in, 25
"Federalist," the, 183, 240
Federalist party, New York the seat of power of, 181, 182; struggle with Anti-Federalists, 186; first big

break in, 188; successes of, 189; fall of, 192; merciless use of patronage, 197; support the British, 200
Federal Union, equality a necessity in, 133, 134
Feudal privileges, 16, 25
Fifth Avenue, 243
Fires, incendiary, in 1741, 121; during British occupation, 168; large losses by, 234
Fire-water, introduction among Indians, 7
Fisheries, early, 53, 67, 90
Fitch, John, pioneer in steam navigation, 209
Fletcher, Benjamin, governor, 96; connection with pirates, 96; character, 97; quarrels with New England and with Assembly, 99; recalled, 99
Florida, 3
Flour, monopoly of bolting and exporting, 60
Fort, early, 14
Fort Orange, 47
France, enmity to, 71, 89; wars with, 90
Franchise, different kinds of, 175
Freeholders, privileges of, 118, 175, 178
French, settlements in America, 3; characteristics of pioneers, 23
French wars, retarded American Revolution, 132
French war-ship, terrorizes city, 105
Frontenac, Louis de B., cruelties in New York and New England, 83
Frontiersman, evolution of, 23
Fulton, Robert, introduces steam navigation, 209; builds steam frigate, 209
Fur trade, 7, 9, 18, 131, 218

Gage, Gen. Thomas, commander of garrison, 139; yields stamps to municipal authorities, 141
Gallatin, Albert, abhorrence of partisan proscription, 196
Gallows, the, 37
"Gazette," the, first newspaper, 123
"General Armstrong," fight of the, 210
George III., effect of his blunders, 137; address by Stamp Act Congress to, 138; erection of monument to, 142; monument destroyed, 142
German Calvinists, in the eighteenth century, 109
German Lutherans, in the eighteenth century, 109
Germans, early settlers, 14, 34; immigration of, 106, 224, 228, 256; furnish large proportion of auxiliaries to British troops, 161, note
Governor, restrictions on power of, 177
Grant, Gen. U. S., Memoirs of, 260, 261
Guinea Coast, trade with, 91
Gustavus Adolphus, influence of his death on America's future, 4

Haarlem Heights, American victory at, 164
Hale, Nathan, capture and execution of, 169
"Half Moon," the, reaches

the Hudson, 1; returns to Holland, 8
Hall, Oakey, mayoralty of, 252
Hall of Justice, 73
Hamilton, Alexander, conservative principles of, 137, attitude in the Revolution, 151; in retreat at Kip's Bay, 164; leader of Federalist party, 181; character, 186, 189; defender of Loyalists, 182; success in Federal movement, 183; procession in honor of, 184; heart of Federalist party, 186; Secretary of Treasury, 187; Livingston's opinion of, 188; dislike of Burr, 189; maltreatment of, 191; killed by Burr, 199
"Harper's Magazine," 260
"Harper's Weekly," exposures of Tweed, 253
Hartford, Conn., mail between New York and, 54
Hebrew immigration, 256
Hessians, employment as troops, and hatred of, 159
Hickey, Thomas, hung for plot against Washington, 160
Holland, war with England, 51, 54
Horse-racing under Governor Lovelace, 53
Hospitals, 206, 257
Houses, of early settlers, 37, 38; at beginning of nineteenth century, 204; modern, 244
Howe, Lord, attacks the city, 161, 162; victories of, 165
Hudson, Hendrik, discovers Hudson River, 1, 6; returns to Holland, 8
Hudson Bay Company, 16
Hudson River, in hands of the Dutch, 3; early belief about, 6; scenery, 8; new settlements on, 25; operations of British fleet on, 161; steamboats on, 216
Huguenots, early settlers, 14, 34, 48, 49; religious liberty under English rule, 50; benefits conferred on, 66; element in population, 71, 110
Hungarian immigration, 256
Hunter, Robert, appointed governor, 106

Immigrants, a bad class of, 119
Immigration, encouragement of, 25; increase of, 205, 210, 215, 222 *et seq.*; change in character of, 256
Import duties, reserved to Duke of York, 66
Independence, but dimly seen at first, 136; the logical result of revolutionary measures, 156
India, search for new route to, 1, 6
Indian Ocean, trade with ports of, 91; piracy on, 94
Indians, fate of, 5; on shores of Hudson River, 6, 7; early strife with, 6; first taste of fire-water, 7; trade with, 10; sell Manhattan Island, 14; Minuit's relations with, 16, 18; Van Twiller's relations with, 20; massacre Dutch colonists on Delaware River, 21; sale of weapons to, forbidden, 24; war with, under Kieft's administration, 26, 28; Stuyvesant's relations

with, 39; danger from, 46, 47; treatment by Governor Nicolls, 51; relations with Governor Lovelace, 53; end of slavery of, 61; Dongan's relations with, 68; private acquisitions of land from, 97
Ingoldsby, Richard, lieutenant-governor, lands at New York, 86; skirmish with Leisler's troops, 86
Inns, 25, 118
Irish, prominent element of population, 110; Protestantism of early settlers, 110; furnish large proportion of auxiliaries to British troops, 161, note; immigration, 224, 226; riots, 250, 251; decrease of immigration, 256
Irving, Washington, 208, 240
Italians, maritime enterprise of, 2; immigration, 256

Jail, the, 118
James II. (*see* also YORK, DUKE OF), accession of, 68; change of policy, 68; opposition to, 70; tyranny of, 76; hatred of his government, 76, 77; action in exile, 79
Java, value compared with New Netherlands, 4, 57
Jay, John, conservative principles of, 137; member of Committee of Fifty-one, 147; attitude in the Revolution, 151; leader in Provincial Congress, 155; leader of Federalist party, 181, 186; character, 181, 186; defender of Loyalists, 182; joint author of the "Federalist," 183; opposition to, 187; appointed chief-justice, 187; treaty with England, 190; appointments of, 195.
Jealousy, class, 73; ill effects of, 129, 158; Washington's troubles from State, 171
Jefferson, Thomas, tie-vote in Electoral College, 193; chosen President, 193; maxim as to patronage, 195; antagonism to Burr, 197
Jeffersonian Republicans, rise of, 186
Jews, religious community in eighteenth century, 109; prohibition of suffrage to, 112
Johnson family, leaders in court party, 136; rulers of Mohawk Valley, 136
Judges, election of, 214
Justices, first, 50

Kidd, Captain, fitted out as pirate-hunter, 101; turns pirate, 101; hung, 101; buried treasure of, 102
Kieft, William, succeeds Van Twiller, 22; character and government, 19; Indian wars, 26; chooses council, 29; removed, 30
King, Rufus, made senator, 187
King's College, under control of Church of England, 112; expulsion of president, 154, change of name, 173; *see* also COLUMBIA COLLEGE
Kip's Bay, American forces routed at, 163, 164
Knickerbocker Club, 257
Know-Nothing party, 237

Labor, early colonial, 118, 122

Labor party, of 1830, 235
Labor riots, 234
La Montagne, Johannes, councillor with Kieft, 24, 27
Language, English, the official, 110; abandonment of Dutch, 111, 211; French, 211, and note; German, 211, 224, 225
Launderer, a pedagogical, 20
Lawrence, Cornelius Van Wyck, elected mayor, 235
Legislative council, the first, 36
Legislature, loyalty to George III., 150; control city government, 178, 179
Leisler, Jacob, leader of popular party in 1689, 75; character, 75, 80; quarrel with collector of the port, 76; overcomes lieutenant-governor and city council, 78; short-sighted policy of, 80, 82; opposition to Episcopalians and Puritans, 81; general opposition to, 81; disobeys royal proclamation, 82; nominated as commander-in-chief, 82; assumes the title of lieutenant-governor, 82; rule not recognized by Albany, 83; quarrel with New England allies, 84; treatment of Long Islanders, 84; deserted by his supporters, 85; refuses to recognize Lt.-Gov. Ingoldsby, 85; arrested and hung, 86; disinterred and honored, 100
Leislerian party, put down, 104; influence of, 105
Lewis Morgan, 191; elected governor, 198; defeat of, 199
Libel law, obsolete theory of, 124
Liberties and privileges, charter of, 66; granted by Dongan, 67
Liberty, struggle for, 179
Liberty pole, erection of, 143; riot over, 144, 145
Libraries, the New York Society, 174; the Astor, 218
Literary societies, 207, 208
Literature, early colonial, 117; rise of, 208; the birthplace of American, 240; growth of, 260
Livingston, Edward, appointed mayor and U. S. district attorney, 196
Livingston, Robert R., feelings toward Hamilton, 188
Livingston, Robert, partner with Captain Kidd, 101
Livingston family, descent of, 87, note; armorial bearings of, 115; leaders in, the popular party, 125, 136, 142; prominent members of, 155, note; 156, note; supporters of Hamilton, 187; indorse Burr, 189; distrust of Burr, 191; apportionment of patronage among, 196; opposition to Burr, 197; decline of power, 200; power of, 202
Local boards, 239
Loco-foco party, 236
Long Island, English take possession of eastern half of, 26; revolt against Stuyvesant on, 40; Puritans refuse to be taxed, 53; horse-racing on, 53; troubles between Puritans and Colve, 56; Leisler's operations in, 84; Tory majority in, 158; landing of British

troops on, 161; supply of provisions from, 205
Long Island Sound, first ship on, 9; new settlements on, 25; passage forced by British fleet, 164, 165; steamboats on, 216
Lovelace, Gov. Francis, successor to Nicolls, 52; character, 52; troubles with Long Island Puritans, 53; supported by Dutch and English, 53; relations with Indians, 53; establishes mail to Boston and Hartford, 54
Loyalists, devotion of, 151; plundered, 153; their newspaper office wrecked, 154; flight of, 160· in population surrounding the city, 166; deported on evacuation, 172; Hamilton and Jay as defenders of, 182; restored to legal equality with other citizens, 182; *see* also TORIES
Loyalty, lack of, in early Dutch settlers, 16; of citizens at outbreak of civil war, 247
Ludlow family, prominent members of, 155, and note.
Lutheran Church, growth of, 256
Lutherans, persecution by Stuyvesant, 42; religious liberty under English rule, 50
Lützen, battle of, 4

Madagascar, pirate station at, 94
Madison, James, joint author of the "Federalist," 183
Magazines, 260
Magyar immigration, 256
Maiden Lane, origin of name, 37
Mall, the, 113
Manhattan, discovery of, 1, 6; value compared with Java, 4; Dutch post on, 9; early civilized life on, 10; sold to the Dutch, 14
Manufacture, right to, 25
Markets, 205
Massachusetts, effects of rebellion in, 180
Mayor, first, 50; office abolished, 55; appointed by governor, 67; first elective, 83; appointment of James Duane, 178
Mayoralty, colonial system of appointment, 178; change in manner of election to, 214; first election by universal suffrage, 235
Mayors, various nationalities of, 107
Meeting, first popular, 29
Mercenary troops, New England, 28; employment of Hessians, and hatred for, 159
Merchants, early colonial, 117
Methodist Church, strength before the Revolution and at present day, 109; increase in, 174
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 260
Metropolitan Opera House, 260
Milborne, Jacob, leader of popular party in 1689, 75; hung, 86; disinterred, 100
Military law, established by Colve, 57
Militia, rising against Gov. Nicholson, 77, 78
Mill, the first, 18
Minuit, Peter, first governor

of the colony, 13; character, 15; buys Manhattan Island from Indians, 14; relations with Indians, 16; relations with English, 18; rule of, 18; recall of, 19; enters Swedish service, 19; leads band of Swedes to the Delaware, 26
Mitchell, Dr. Samuel, 208
Mohawk River, fort near, 9
Mohawks, secret society, reorganization of, 146
Mohawk Valley, under rule of Johnson family, 136
Money, issue of paper, 107
Montreal, Schuyler's raids on, 83
Morris, Chief-Justice, expelled from office, 124; conservative principles of, 137
Morris, Gouverneur, type of Whig party, 150; attitude in the Revolution, 151; leader of Federalist party, 181; position in 1812, 201; elected senator, 189; plans Erie Canal, 215
Morris family, armorial bearings of, 115; leaders in Provincial Congress, 155
Morse, Samuel F. B., 216
Mount Vernon Gardens, 204
Museums, 260

Native American party, 194, 237
Naturalization, 47, 66
Negroes, early importations of, 34; legislation against assemblages of, 67; plot of 1741, 119; massacre of, 122; annual celebration of Pinkster, 116; emancipation, 211; suffrage, 213; in draft riots, 248
Netherlands, cradle of seamen, 1
New Amsterdam, founded, 14; mixture of population, 14, 34; beginning of stable existence, 34; compared with New England, 35; society in, 35, 36; incorporation of, 36; appearance of the town, 37, 38; costume in, 39; amusements, 39; seized by England, 43, 44; name changed to New York, 46, 57
New England, English settlements in, 3; compared with New Amsterdam, 35; colonists held in check by Stuyvesant, 40; settlers opposed to aristocracy and Episcopacy, 49; united to New York and New Jersey, 69; action on fall of the Stuarts, 74; indifference to welfare of New York, 99; quarrels with Gov. Fletcher, 99; indifference to New York's prosperity, 129; sympathy for, in New York, 146
New Englanders, characteristics of, 23; kept in check by Colve, 56
"New England Invasion," the, 211
New Jersey, settlements in, 25; severed from New York, 59; united with New York and New England, 69; retreat of Washington to, 165
"New Netherland," the, 13
New Netherland Company, formation of the, 11
New Netherlands, value compared with Java and Surinam, 4, 57; named, 11;

decline of, 23; seized by England, 44
Newsboys' lodging house, 257
Newspapers, scurrility of, 189, 190; *see* also their titles.
New Year observance, 116
New Yorker, composition of a typical, 108
New York Medical Society, 174
New York Province, united with New England and New Jersey, 69
New York Society Library, 174
Nicholson, Sir Francis, leader of aristocratic party in 1689, 74; quarrel with militia, 78
Nicolls, Col. Richard, seizes New Amsterdam, 44; agent for Duke of York, 47; rule in New York, 47; character, 47, 51; refuses right of election of representatives, 50; treatment of Indians, 51; benefits of his control, 51; returns to England, 52
Night-schools, 257
"Nine Men," the, 42
Non-importation agreement, the, 139
North Carolina, effects of rebellion in, 180
Northwest passage, search for, 1, 6

O'Brien, Colonel, killed in draft riots, 249
"Onrest," the, first ship built in American waters, 9
Opera-house riot, 233

Pacific Mail Steamship Company, 219
Packet ships, 221
Palisades, the, 8
Panic, of 1836, 234
Paper money, issue of, 107, 178
Parks, 257
Park Theatre, 203
Parties, political, 49, 61; effect of race on, 75
Passport system, 24
Paternal government, 24, 32, 33
Patriotism of Revolutionary party, 159; of Presbyterian settlers, 161, note.
Patronage, early system of, 178; Jefferson's maxim as to, 195; merciless use of, 197
Patroon, title of, 16
Patroons, troubles with, 17; privileges of, 25; turned into manorial lords, 50; Stuyvesant's struggles with, 41
Penn, William, advice to James II., 64
Philadelphia, compared with New York in 1710, 108; sentiment about Tea Act, 146; meeting of Congress at, 185
Phillipse family, leaders in court party, 74, 136
Pinkster, observance of, 116
Piracy, premium on, 98
Pirates, 91, 92; success and numbers of, 92, 93; engaged in slave trade, 93; efforts toward abolition of, 96; Bellomont's crusade against, 101; career of Captain Kidd, 101
Players' Club, 260
Plots, rumors of Catholic, 77; negro, 120; for abduction or murder of Washington, 160

Plundering, by Continental Army, 161
Plymouth settlers, enter the Connecticut Valley, 21
Police board, 239
Police riots, 239
Polish immigration, 256
Political corruption, 251, 252, 263
Poor-house, 118
Poor-laws, 107
Popular government, foreshadowing of, 29
Popular party, in 1689, 73; constitution of, 74, 136; in control of the city, 78; downfall of, 86; opposed by Fletcher, 97; corruption of, 104; hated by Cornbury, 104; newspaper of the, 123; known as Whigs, 125; great families in, 136; shrink from independence, 149; excesses by, 151
Popular rights, struggle for, 88
Population, increase of, 18; character of early, 34, 35, 47, 48; at time of second establishment of English rule, 59; fusion of races, 72, 108, 227; in 1710, 108; at outbreak of Revolution, 108; diversity of, 108; line drawn between Provincial and Old World people, 114; Presbyterians, Dutch, and Huguenots, 136; increase after Revolution, 173; at beginning of nineteenth century, 202; condition at close of war of 1812, 210, 211; in 1820, 213; increase of, 215; in 1860, 245; proportion of foreign element in, 256; Americanization of, 256
Portugal, early explorations of, 2
"Potiphar Papers," 241
Poverty, dangers of, 222
Presbyterians, opposed to aristocracy and episcopacy, 49; persecuted by Cornbury, 104, 105; immigration of, 107; strength in eighteenth century, 110
Press, liberty of, 124
Press-gangs, 139
Princeton College, 116
Prison-ships, horrors of, 170
Privateering, popular and profitable, 91, 92, 93, 210
Privateers, depredations on commerce, 54, 90; capture of French ships by, 84; riots of crews, 92; fitted out in British interests, 166
Protestants, liberty of conscience granted to, 87
Provincial Assembly, demanded and granted, 63; issue of writs for, 65
Public buildings, 19, 257
Public lands, apportionment of, by Fletcher, 97
Puritans, hostility to Dutch, 21; insubordination on Long Island, 53; troubles with Colve, 56; hostility of Andros to, 61
Putnam, Gen. Israel, 164

Quakers, refuge for, 26; persecution by Stuyvesant, 42; in the eighteenth century, 109
Queen Anne, appoints Lord Cornbury governor, 104; resemblance of Lord Cornbury to, 104

Race, effect on parties, 75
Race prejudice, early, 49

Races, mixture of, 14
Railroads, development of, 216
Raritan Indians, war with, 26, 27, 28
Redemptioners, 118
Red River, Valley of, barred from settlement, 16
Red Sea, trade with ports of, 91; piracy on, 94
Red Star Line, the, 221
Religion, effect on parties, 75
Religious bodies, in colonial times, 109
Religious differences, 229, 230
Religious liberty, 26, 47, 50, 53, 64, 65, 174
Rensselaerswyck, extent of, 17; Stuyvesant's troubles with the patroon of, 41
Republican party, origin of name, 186; rise of, 237
"Restless," the; *see* "ONREST"
Revolution, causes leading to, 126; first bloodshed in the, 145; dangers of, 153; operations against New York, 159; results of war, 193
Ring politics, 252, 253
Riots, Stamp Act, 140; liberty-pole, 144, 145; ante-Revolution, 153, 154; anti-Federalist, 190; theatre, 232; Astor Place, 233; bread, 234; labor, 234; abolition, 234; election, 234; police, 239; draft, 250; Hibernian, 250
Riverside Drive, 257
Roman Catholic Church, hatred of, 76; priests condemned to death by Assembly, 105; weakness before the Revolution, 109; increased strength at present day, 109; growth, 215, 229, 256; Americanization of, 231
Roman Catholics, forbidden entrance to the colony, 112; patriotism of, in Maryland, 161, note; liberation of, 174
Roosevelt, Isaac, 155, note.
Roosevelt, John J., 156, note.
Roosevelt, Nicholas, leader in Provincial Congress, 155 note; pioneer in steam navigation, 209
Russian immigration, 256
Rynders, Isaiah, 238, 246

Sabbatarian legislation, 67
St. Lawrence River, French commonwealth on, 4
St. Mark's Church, 31
St. Patrick's Church, 240
Sanitary Commission, the, 248
Sanitary conditions, 205
Santa Fé, 5
Saskatchewan Valley, barred from settlement, 16
Savings bank, the first, 206
Scandinavian immigration, 256
Schepens, abolition of the, 50; office restored, 55
Schoolmaster, the first, 20
Schools, 118
School system, founded, 206; Roman Catholic opposition to, 237
Schout-fiscal, the, 19; abolition of the, 50; office restored, 55
Schuyler, Peter, leads opposition to Leisler in Albany, 83; raids on Montreal, 84
Schuyler, Philip J., elected senator, 189
Schuyler family, leaders in

the popular party, 136; supporters of Hamilton, 187
Scientific societies, 207
Sclave immigration, 256
"Scribner's Magazine," 260
Seafaring population, 90, 91
Seamen, an age of, 1, 2; bravery of colonial, 130
"Sea-Mew," the, brings the first true colonists, 13
Sea-rovers, 2
Sears, Isaac, 155
Secession, proposed, 246
Sedan chairs, 115
Self-government, Dutch love for, 24; demands for, 29; early steps toward, 66, 90; failure under James II., 69; action of Assembly in regard to, 105; a necessary ingredient in, 106; of Canada and Australia, 131; restriction of, 178; powers of American cities contrasted with those of Europe, 178
Selfishness, among colonists, 129
Separationists, 149
Separatist idea, 70
Servants, early colonial, 118, 121
Settlement, first, 8, 12
Seventh Regiment, 247
Seymour, Gov. Horatio, conduct in draft riots, 249; in presidential election of 1868, 252
Sheriff, first, 50; office abolished, 55; appointment of, 178
Sherman, Gen. W. T., 261
Ship-building, 220
Slavers, as pirates, 93
Slaves, early importations of, 35; legislation against assemblages of, 67; insurrections of, 107, 120; in early colonial times, 119, 122; *see* also NEGROES
Slave trade, 91
Sloughter, Governor, 85, 86
Smith, Rev. Sydney, criticism on American literature, 240
Smuggling, early, 92; premium on, 98; put down by Bellomont, 100
Social life, 115, 185; at beginning of nineteenth century, 202, 204; in modern times, 242, 244, 262
Social lines, 112
Society, in New Amsterdam, 35, 36; in 1710, 108, 109
Sons of Liberty, organization of, 138; meeting of, 140; defense of the liberty-pole, 144; reorganization of, 146; riots and proceedings of, 153
Spain, early explorations of, 2; waning power of, 2; tenacity in America, 3; warfare of the West India Company against, 12, 13; wars with, 90
Spanish wars, retarded American Revolution, 132
Spoils system, establishment of, 194; De Witt Clinton's introduction of, 215
Sports, early colonial, 115, 116
Stadt-huys, the, 37
Stamp Act, passage of, 138, 139; opposition to, 138, 149; rioting, 138, 141; repeal of, 141
Stamp Act Congress, meeting of, 138; Declaration of Rights and Address by 138
Staten Island, settlements

on, 25; Tory majority in, 158
Steam navigation, beginning of, 208; increase in, 216; Vanderbilt's connection with, 218
Stevens, John, pioneer in steam navigation, 209
Stockades, Indian, 28; on site of Wall Street, 37
Stock-swindling, 252
Storm-King, 8
Street railways, beginning of, 238
Streets, laying out, 25; lighting of, 205; cleaning of, 205
Stuart dynasty, consequences of overthow of, 73, 89
Stuyvesant, Peter, succeeds Kieft as governor, 30; tradition about, 31; personal appearance and character, 32; residence, 37; relations with Indians and New Englanders, 40; seizes the Swedish colony on the Delaware, 40; quarrels with the colonists, 40
Suffrage, limitations of, 175; widening of, 213; universal, 262
Sugar-house, used as prison, 170
Sumptuary laws, 24
Surinam, value compared with New Netherlands, 52, 57
Swallow Tail Line of packets, the, 221
Swedes, settlements in America, 3, 4; trouble on the Delaware, 26, 40

Tammany Hall, controls Democratic party, 237
Taverns, the first, 21; establishment of, 118
Taxation, opposition to Stuyvesant's plan of, 42; of Long Island Puritans, 53; by Colve, 57; indirect, 131, 132; claim of "no taxation without representation," 132
Tea Act, passage of, 146; opposition to, 146, 147, 149
Tenant-farming, favored by Fletcher, 97
Theatre, early, 115
"Times," the, exposures of Tweed, 253
Tories, name assumed by court party, 125; numerous in New York, 134; rioting by, 149; persecution of, 150, 154; ferocity of struggle with Whigs, 153; weakening influence among colonists, 157; plotting among, 160; destruction of power, 177; *see* also LOYALISTS
Trading companies, 11, 13
Traveling, in early colonial days, 115
Treasurer, early powers of, 178
Trenton, battle of, 165
"Tri-Insula," proposed independent commonwealth, 246
Trinity Church, rebuilt, 173; beauty of, 240
Tryon, Gov. William, 154
Tweed, William M., 253

Underhill, Capt. John, Indian fighter, 28, 40
Union, rise of the principle of 179
Union Club, 257
Union League Club, 257
University Club, 257

Ury, Rev. John, hung for complicity in negro plot, 122

Van Cortlandt, Stephanus, leader of aristocratic party in 1689, 74; chased from the city, 82
Vanderbilt, Cornelius, 217, 219
Van Rensselaer, patroon, 17
Van Rensselaer family, leaders in Provincial Congress, 155; supporters of Hamilton, 187; influence of, 200
Van Twiller, Wouter, succeeds Minuit, 19; character, 20; relations with Indians, 20; relations with English, 20; removal of, 22
Van Wyck, Abraham, 156, note.
Varick, Robert, mayoralty of, 196
Vassalage, system of, 17
Virginia, English settlements in, 3; influence over other colonies, 150
Virginians, take possession of Dutch forts on Delaware River, 21
Vox Populi placards, 140

Walker, William, filibuster, 219
Wallabout Bay, prison ships in, 170
Walloons, early colonists, 13, 14; early settlers of New Amsterdam, 34
Wall Street, origin of name, 37; swindling in, 252
Warehouses, first, 18
War of 1812, 209
Washington, D. C., 261
Washington, George, rebukes destroyers of monument, 142; passes through New York to Boston, 154; makes New York his headquarters, 156; discordant materials for his work, 158; plot for abduction or murder of, 160; proposes to burn the city, 160; training his raw army, 160, 161; punishes outrages by his army, 161; rescues forces from Long Island, 162; courage of, 162, 163; evacuates New York, 162, 163; at rout at Kip's Bay, 163; at Haarlem Heights, 164; retreat from New York, 165; retreats to New Jersey, 165; crosses the Delaware, 165; wins battle of Trenton, 165; difficulties of his position, 171; re-enters city, 171; influence of, 180; inaugurated President, 185; a Federalist, 188; appointments in New York, 188, 195; respect for memory of, 259
Water, early supply of, 205
Wealth, increase after Revolution, 173; growth of, 245
Webster, Noah, 190
"We Dare" placards, 140
Weehawken, N. J., Hamilton-Burr duel at, 199
"Weekly Journal," the, established, 123, 124
West India Company, chartered, 11; real founders of the city, 12, 13; magnitude of its operations, 12, 13; appreciation of stock, of, 16; treatment of colony, 18; decline of interest in New Netherlands, 22; death of, 55

West Indies, early trade with, 90
Whale fisheries, early, 53
Whig party, the, 235
Whigs, name assumed by popular party, 125; attitude in early days of Revolution, 150; ferocity of struggle with Tories, 153
Whitehall, 37
Whitehall Street, origin of name, 37
White Plains, battle of, 165
Wild beasts, 14
William III., accession of, 70; appoints governor and lieutenant-governor, 85; grant of liberties by, 90
Windmills, 19
Wolves, reward for scalps, 37
Wood, Fernando, elected mayor, 238; disloyalty of, 246
Working-classes, 263
Working-girls' clubs, 257

Yellow fever, scourges of, 205
York, Duke of, 46; patentee of New Netherlands, 47; character, 53; advocates religious tolerance for New York, 53; summons Andros to England, 62; sends spy to examine affairs of colony, 62; takes advice, from William Penn, 64; *see* also JAMES II.

Zenger, John Peter, founder of the "Weekly Journal," 123; arrest and trial of, 124

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